THE

RECTOR's SON.

VOL. I.

BRITISH MUSEUM

4941.

THE

RECTOR's SON,

IN THREE VOLUMES,

By ANNE PLUMPTRE,

AUTHOR OF ANTOINETTE.

VOL. I.

L'imagination ne sauroit inventer tant de diverses contrariétés qu'il y en a naturellement dans le cœur de chaque personne.

ROCHEFOUCAULD.

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THE RECTOR's SON.

CHAPTER I.

A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had chang'd, nor wish'd to change, his place;
Unskilful he to fawn or seek for pow'r
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour:
Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched, than to rise;
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wand'rings, but reliev'd their pain.

GOLDSMITH.

As long as the humble voice of indigent distress, shall be able to call forth the tender sensations of sympathy in the breasts of Englishmen, they must be deeply felt in contemplating the sufferings of a very numerous class of their fellow-countrymen, known un-

der the deſcription of the poor clergy; ſufferings of the moſt acute kind to which human nature is ſubjected, as they are more corporeal than mental. Placed in a ſituation in which they are expected to ſuſtain the rank of gentlemen, they have ſcarcely the means of procuring even the common neceſſaries of life, much leſs of obtaining thoſe ſuperfluities which are conſidered as eſſential appendages to that rank; while, to aggravate their hardſhips, they are cut off by their profeſſion, from numberleſs ways of amending their circumſtances, which might be reſorted to in a different ſituation; and thus they are compelled to ſtarve on from year to year, without any proſpect of amelioration in their condition.

But, perhaps, the moſt mortifying conſideration of all to theſe unhappy perſons is, that while many of them with large families, drag on a miſerable exiſtence upon an inconſiderable income, earned by induſtry and inceſſant application to parochial duties, they behold a biſhop of Durham, without any family, revelling in all the luxuries to be procured by an income of twelve thouſand pounds a year; while

while for ſuch immoderate gains, the ſum total of what he does, may be compriſed in a cypher. But here let me pauſe — I do not mean to write an Eſſay on the hardſhips they ſuffer, although it be an ample field for the philanthropiſt to expatiate on; theſe reflections were ſuggeſted by the Story I am about to relate, as the hero was the youngeſt ſon of one of them.

At the time when our hiſtory commences, the Rev. Mr. Meadows had been for more than twenty years rector of the pariſh of Llanwelly in Denbighſhire, with a ſalary of only forty pounds a year. On this ſlender pittance he married early in life, and had had a very large family, of which only ſix were at that time living, and to theſe a farther addition was in a ſhort time expected. This circumſtance, however, at which ſome perſons in Mr. Meadows's ſituation would have murmured, he, on the contrary, rejoiced in, as he conſidered every increaſe of his family as an increaſe of happineſs, and an additional ſpur to his induſtry in contriving means for their ſupport. And he did ſupport them—hear it, O ye ſons

and daughters of affluence! into whoſe coffers the riches of the land are perpetually pouring, and who are yet, as ye declare, unable to diſcharge the large demands to which ye have ſubjected yourſelves from the honeſt and induſtrious tradeſman,—he did actually ſupport a wife and ſix children on only forty pounds a year, without ever incurring a debt with any one, ſince he made it a point of honeſty never to purchaſe what he had not money to pay for on the ſpot. Nay, what was ſtill more extraordinary, he even contrived to ſpare ſomething out of his very ſlender pittance, for the relief of his ſtill poorer neighbours.

His parſonage-houſe, or rather cottage, was ſituated in the beautiful vale of Llanrwſt, on the ſkirts of a remote and ſhady grove, near the banks of the river Conway. Imagination could not picture to itſelf a more enchanting or romantic ſpot. One ſide of the vale bordered by the Snowdon Hills, down whoſe ſteep and ſhaggy ſides cataracts foamed in various forms and directions, with woods of ſhining beech interſperſed at intervals between them, which when illumined at evening by

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the ſetting ſun, appeared like foreſts of wavy gold, formed a ſcene ſublimely pictureſque. Theſe rocks and precipices were animated by here and there a ſtray goat, which climbed amongſt the ledges inacceſſible to the foot of man, to ſeek out the ſcanty tufts of graſs which the unfruitful ſoil afforded, while the happier herds grazed luxuriantly in the vale below, the fertility of which, formed a fine contraſt to the barrenneſs of the ſurrounding rocks. Through this vale the river Conway meandered beautifully, till it joined the waters of the ocean, to which one part of the vale was open, and which terminated the view from our Rector's cottage. Such was the ſpot in which fate had placed this ſon of obſcurity, and where he reſided from neceſſity alone; but which, from its beauty and ſublimity, might have been ſelected as the choſen reſidence of the moſt refined child of taſte.

But what was beauty of ſcenery to a man who could but juſt live? To him it was of ſmall import whether the ſummit of Snowdon were clear or cloudy. If the tufts on its ſides would furniſh nouriſhment for his goats, (for

a few goats he had) he cared not, he thought not, about the proſpect to be ſeen from its heights; and if the woods would afford him fuel to blaze on his hearth, it was a matter of perfect indifference to him whether thoſe woods might, or might not, be diſpoſed with the pictureſque effect, with which they would have been arranged by the taſte of a Brown or a Repton.

Of his ſix children, the two eldeſt were ſons, the other four daughters. The former were both bound out as apprentices to reputable trades; on which occaſion, it is true, Mr. Meadows had been aſſiſted with a benefaction of ten pounds each time, from a charity for the relief of the poor clergy. Nor was the bounty in either inſtance ill beſtowed, for the young men diſplayed a ſpirit of induſtry and application, which at once bore teſtimony to the good foundation which had been laid in their minds, under their parental roof, and gave promiſe of their making a reſpectable figure in the world in future. It was alſo the intention of the worthy father, to put his daughters into a way of gaining their own livelihoods,

livelihoods, and he had actually agreed for a ſituation for the eldeſt, on which ſhe was to enter as ſoon as ſhe could be ſpared after her mother's approaching confinement; when fortune ſuddenly, and moſt unexpectedly, wrought a total change in his circumſtances.

Charles Blandford, Eſq. a gentleman about thirty years of age, and poſſeſſed of conſiderable property in the county of Shropſhire, (which he had recently inherited at the death of a diſtant relation) in the courſe of a tour which he was making, came by accident to the parſonage at Llanwelly, attracted thither, no doubt, by the uncommon beauty of its ſituation. Benevolence, and ſympathy towards his fellow-creatures, were the leading principles in this gentleman's character, and for their exerciſe he found ample ſcope in the ſcene which was now preſented to him. He was charmed with that honeſt ſimplicity which formed the moſt ſtriking feature in the character of the guileleſs Mr. Meadows, and which could not have appeared in a more advantageous light, than in the anſwers he made to the many queſtions put to him by his

gueſt, relative to his ſituation and mode of living. Nor was Mr. Blandford leſs pleaſed with the perfect order and neatneſs which he obſerved in the houſe, and the propriety of behaviour among the young people, which ſufficiently teſtified that, notwithſtanding the difficulties with which their parents had had to contend in maintaining them, ſtill their education had not been neglected. Mrs. Meadows ſet before him bread and butter, fruit, and goat's milk, which was the beſt food their ſimple way of life afforded, and he ate them with a reliſh which is often wanting to greater luxuries, while he feaſted in idea on the plans, which from that moment he began to form, to raiſe worth ſuch as he beheld to its more proportionate level in ſociety.

On taking leave, he promiſed that this his firſt viſit, ſhould be only a prelude to farther intercourſe with the rector, and indeed he made ſome ſtay at Conway for the ſole purpoſe of facilitating it, and of aſſuring himſelf more fully that his intended kindneſs would not be miſplaced. Of this, every viſit that he made at the parſonage, every information

that

that he could procure relative to the family, more and more convinced him, till at laſt his heart became ſo deeply intereſted in their concerns, that, like the faithful magnet to the pole, it could point to no other quarter.

Fortunately for the gratification of theſe feelings, the living of Milſingtown in Shropſhire, which was in his patronage, and only three miles diſtant from his own ſeat at Sherborne, had at that time juſt become vacant, and with this he reſolved to reward the patient induſtry which he ſo much admired. Accordingly, on his laſt viſit to Mr. Meadows previouſly to his proceeding on his tour, he put the preſentation to it into his hands, ſaying at the ſame time, with eyes beaming with benevolence, that in what he was doing, he conſidered himſelf as aſking, rather than conferring a favour.

Aſtoniſhment, at firſt rendered Mr. Meadows incapable of believing that what he heard and ſaw could be really true. That Mr. Blandford ſhould, unſolicited, beſtow a living of three hundred pounds a year (for ſuch was its value) on a perſon but juſt known to him, and from no other motive but that of pure

benevolence, was ſo extraordinary, that it ſeemed impoſſible to be true; he looked at the paper, turned aſide to conceal the ſtarting tear, and putting it back into Mr. Blandford's hands—"Ah, Sir," ſaid he, "pray do not mock me! I thought you too good to ſport with the feelings of any one."

"And might the lightning of heaven ſtrike me at that moment, could I ever prove capable of doing ſo!" cried Mr. Blandford emphatically. "No, I am ſerious, my good friend, nor was ever more ſo,—take it; I do not give it as a *reward* of your virtue, for virtue ſuch as your's is its own *reward*,—I give it as the pledge of that friendſhip, in which I hope we are to continue for the reſt of our lives."

Mr. Meadows eſſayed to ſpeak—it was impoſſible—he leaned againſt the rails of his little garden, by which he was ſtanding, while this ſudden burſt of proſperity drew down his cheeks a ſhower of tears, which adverſity could never force, and which thanked his benefactor in terms more eloquent than words could frame. Mr. Blandford felt their power, and while exultation at the happineſs he had confered,

conferred, throbbed in his boſom, he could find no way to expreſs it, but by joining his tears to thoſe of the tranſported rector. It is needleſs to dwell on the joy which this unexpected turn of fortune diffuſed over the whole family; thoſe who could not feel it without deſcription, could never be made to feel it even with the moſt elaborate.—If any ſuch there be, they claim my pity.

No delay was made by Mr. Meadows in taking poſſeſſion of the bounty thus liberally beſtowed on him, that he with his family might be ſettled at their new habitation before Mrs. Meadows's confinement. Yet happy as they were in the proſpects now opened to them, when they quitted their humble abode for ever, and took leave of their poor neighbours, to whom the worthy rector had been like a father, by whom he was beloved as ſuch, and who aſſembled around his cottage in tears when he was about to depart;—when they gave a laſt look towards their peaceful dwelling, in which they had enjoyed content at leaſt, if not affluence;—they felt that no tranſport at change of fortune, could repreſs the ſigh of regret, which the parting with ſcenes ſo

long remembered muſt call forth; and, for a moment, the idea of ſuperior happineſs in future was loſt, while ſomething like a lurking wiſh remained, that they could continue in their long-loved ſituation, and in the habits to which they had been for ſo many years accuſtomed.

But theſe feelings gradually wore away, as their diſtance from Llanwelly increaſed; and by the time that they reached the parſonage at Milſingtown, joy had again the complete aſcendant in their boſoms: a ſenſation which every day augmented, in proportion as their intercourſe with their benefactor became more frequent, and they experienced more repeated inſtances of his friendly and benevolent diſpoſition. He, on his part, daily grew more and more attached to them, as their worth became daily more apparent; and when Mrs. Meadows was ſoon after brought to bed of a ſon, he deſired to ſtand godfather to him, and engaged to take on himſelf the care and expence of his education; the child was accordingly baptized by the names of CHARLES-BLANDFORD.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER II.

La mort a des rigueurs à nulle autre pareilles,
On a beau la prier,
La cruelle qu'elle eſt, ſe bouche les oreilles,
Et nous laiſſe crier.

Le pauvre en ſa cabane où la chaume le couvre,
Eſt ſujet à ſes loix,
Et la garde qui veille aux barrieres du Louvre
N'en defend pas nos rois.

MALHERBE.

ABOUT a year after the commencement of the friendſhip between Mr. Blandford and Mr. Meadows, the former was himſelf married to a very amiable woman, the only child of an officer in the navy, with a fortune of ten thouſand pounds; a connection which opened to him a proſpect of enjoying many years of the pureſt conjugal happineſs. Ah, proſpect fair to the fancy, but enjoyed, alas! only

only in idea; bloſſom of delight, beauteous to contemplate, but ſcarcely expanded, ere blaſted! The deſpot which tyrannizes over all mankind, inſenſible alike to the affection of Mr. Blandford for his wife, which was unbounded, and to the virtues of Mrs. Blandford, which rendered her every way deſerving of his affection, cut her off in the prime of life and plenitude of happineſs, after an union of only four years.

In proportion to the felicity which Mr. Blandford had enjoyed in this union, was the affliction he experienced at its being thus cruelly terminated; nor could he find any conſolation in his deſolate ſtate, but in two children which his wife had with her laſt breath recommended to his eſpecial care. Theſe were: a ſon, named Frederick, then about three years old; and a daughter, named Juliana, two years younger.

Not more than three months before this event, Mrs. St. Aubyn, Mr. Blandford's only ſiſter, had buried her huſband, after a lingering illneſs of above two years; and as ſhe was left without children, nor had at that time

fixed

fixed on any plan for her future life, but had been, from the time when ſhe became a widow, with her brother-in-law, in Leiceſterſhire, Mr. Blandford immediately applied to her to come and live with him, and ſupply as much as poſſible, to himſelf and his children, the heavy loſs which they had ſuſtained.

Mrs. St. Aubyn, in reply, ſaid, that ſhe ſhould have conſented to this requeſt with the greateſt pleaſure, had ſhe not juſt adopted a child of her brother's, a little girl about a year and half old, for whom ſhe had conceived the ſtrongeſt affection, and from whom, under ſuch circumſtances, ſhe could not think of ſeparating herſelf. It was indeed, at that time, conſidered by Mr. St. Aubyn, who was a clergyman with a large family, as a moſt important object, to have one of his children thus provided for; for he lived in a conſtant ſtate of anxiety about their future fortunes, as his own means of providing for them were ſlender; and he was among that claſs of perſons who hold it a degradation for the daughters of a clergyman, to be trained to any means of gaining their own livelihood.

But

But ſuch are the viciſſitudes of human affairs, that he lived to bury all his children, except the little girl adopted by Mrs. St. Aubyn, and ſaw all his anxieties for their ſettlement in life, terminated in a manner which painted in the ſtrongeſt colours their folly and futility.

What Mrs. St. Aubyn, however, had conſidered as an obſtacle to her accepting Mr. Blandford's propoſal, was not regarded as ſuch by that gentleman, for he renewed his requeſt immediately, aſſuring her, that he ſhould rejoice in having the little Amelia added to his family; indeed, ſhould conſider it as a moſt deſirable circumſtance for his daughter, who would thus have a companion and playfellow of her own age. This only objection obviated, Mrs. St. Aubyn yielded to her brother's wiſhes, and came immediately to Sherborne, accompanied by her little niece, who was ſoon ſcarcely leſs beloved by Mr. Blandford than his own children.

The education of the latter, of Amelia, and of his godſon Charles Meadows, became from that time the principal object of that worthy man's attention, while their amiable manners

manners and affectionate attachment to himſelf and his ſiſter, as well as to each other, formed the higheſt charm of his life.

When Charles, the eldeſt of the four, was eight years old, he was ſent to a ſchool of high reputation, at a houſe called the Priory, about thirty miles from Sherborne, whence, at the age of ſeventeen, he was removed to the Univerſity of Cambridge. The progreſs which he made in his ſtudies at ſchool, was ſuch as even to exceed the moſt ſanguine expectations of his patron, and to give reaſonable hopes of much greater things, as he ſhould advance in life; while, at the ſame time, his diſpoſition and manners were ſo attractive, that it was almoſt the ſame thing to know and love him. So much indeed had he gained on the affections of Mr. Blandford, that he was often heard to ſpeak in terms of the higheſt ſatisfaction, that he had taken ſo promiſing a young man into his protection, and to declare that he thought himſelf much more than repaid for any expence he had occaſioned him, by the heart-felt pleaſure which he received, in contemplating the progreſs he made in the

acquiſition

acquiſition of knowledge, and in every manly accompliſhment, while at the ſame time he preſerved his native artleſs and ingenuous diſpoſition pure and unſullied.

It muſt not however be underſtood, that Charles was entirely taken away from his own family, although Mr. Blandford was at the whole expence, and took the whole management of his education. He thought, and juſtly too, that to do ſo, would be to preclude him from acquiring that affection for his neareſt connections, which ſhould be cultivated by every perſon, and which, though termed natural, is ſolely the reſult of habit, and only to be acquired, and preſerved, by living with them in a frequent intercourſe of friendſhip and good-will. Milſingtown was therefore conſidered as Charles's home, and during the years of his being at ſchool, and at college, his holidays and vacations were divided between that place and Sherborne.

The fair proſpects which his boyiſh years held out were, in his farther progreſs in life, neither totally realiſed, nor did they prove wholly abortive. He poſſeſſed a mind ſo full of

of activity, and a genius ſo acute and comprehenſive, that while he gathered the choiceſt flowers of ſcience and literature with an ardour peculiar to himſelf, and ſoon out-ran in his attainments a very large majority of his cotemporaries at the Univerſity, yet he plucked not the roſes without the thorns, but at the ſame time found ample leiſure to join in the ſcenes of diſſipation which are continually paſſing there, and which are attended with ſomewhat more aſſiduity than the lectures of tutors and profeſſors.

But in apology for Charles, (if the too ardent purſuit of pleaſure will admit of any apology) it muſt be alleged that his pleaſures were never of the low and vulgar kind, to which ſo many of the youth at both our Univerſities are addicted.—Thoſe which alone had charms for him were the moſt elegant and refined, which however they may carry with them a dangerous deluſion to the imagination, do not brutalize the heart and lock up all its finer feelings, but even where they gain the ſtrongeſt hold, ſtill leave the mind open to the impreſſions of ſentiment, and to a lively perception

perception of the beauties of moral rectitude. He was neither a Groom, nor a Black-legs; neither an unvaried Sot, nor a promiſcuous Libertine. If he participated ſomewhat too freely in the pleaſures of the table, it was only among a ſet of men, whoſe manners and converſation were refined as his own, who poſſeſſed a manly liberality of ſentiment, with cultivated and well-informed minds, and in whoſe ſociety he might be ſaid to quaff knowledge even at the very fountain of pleaſure; and although he did not totally abſtain from gallantry, as little could he indulge this propenſity with every wretched being whom he might encounter in her nocturnal perambulations.

It is true that this refinement was, in one reſpect, attended with conſequences peculiarly ill-adapted to his ſituation, as by this means he ran into expences, which a perſon ſo dependent on the bounty of another, ought to have avoided with the utmoſt circumſpection, and which the allowance made him by his patron, although a very liberal one, could by no means ſupport; and thus, by the end of the

he four years which he reſided at Cambridge, e had incurred debts to a very conſiderable mount.

Mr. Blandford beheld the courſe into which e had fallen, with the deepeſt concern, and ot without inwardly cenſuring himſelf for hrowing him into the way of temptations, hich he well knew required no common hare of fortitude to reſiſt. But he had been nduced to ſend him to college, by the advan- ages which he conſidered as accruing to per- ons deſtined for the church, from an Uni- erſity education, and he had always intended o place him in the church, as the profeſſion n which he ſhould be able to provide for im moſt liberally. But the die was now caſt, nd nothing remained but to counter-act, as oon and as effectually as poſſible, the ill im- reſſions he had received during his reſidence t Cambridge; for which purpoſe he removed im entirely from thence, as ſoon as he had aken his Batchelor of Arts degree, which he lid with great credit to himſelf, and conſe- uent ſatisfaction to his friends.

But on this occaſion Mr. Blandford, ſtill true

true to the principles of benevolence by whi
he was invariably actuated, was not unmin
ful of the embaraſſments which he knew hi
to have incurred, and which he was w
aware would cling about him all his life, co
roding and tormenting him like the coat
Neſſus on the parched and agonized limbs
Hercules, unleſs ſome effectual ſteps ſhou
be taken to remove them. He wrote hi
therefore a moſt kind and affectionate lett
requiring an account of his debts, and exhor
ing him to be fair and open in ſtating the
true amount, aſſuring him that he ſhould
much leſs hurt with any extravagance
which he might have been guilty, than wi
the idea that he had not ſufficient confiden
in him, to lay it ingenuouſly before him.

Charles gave as explicit an anſwer to th
kind exhortation as his patron could deſi
nor concealed, or attempted even to gloſs ov
any of his faults; in return for which, he ſo
after received, together with money for th
diſcharge of his debts, a letter containing
few ſhort but affecting ſentences of advi
and admonition with regard to his future co
duct. This mingled kindneſs and lenity, cou
n

not fail of duly influencing a heart ſo tremblingly alive as our hero's, to every act of exalted goodneſs and diſintereſted generoſity, and he became more ardently attached to his patron than ever, and made the moſt determined reſolution never to give him cauſe of reproof any more; a reſolution which Mr. Blandford's ſubſequent conduct every day more fully confirmed, as he never even by the moſt diſtant hint reminded him of his errors, or of the forbearance which had been ſhewn them.

Thus circumſtanced, it was perfectly natural that when he was ſettled with his father at Milſingtown, he ſhould devote all his leiſure hours to viſiting at Sherborne, eſpecially as he was now, from his maturer age and elegant accompliſhments, become a moſt deſirable companion to Mr. Blandford; and accordingly he ſpent as much of his time there as was conſiſtent with a due attention to his own family, which was a point he never neglected, and by whom he was almoſt adored. —They indeed ſcarcely conſidered him as a mortal, but were tempted to claſs him among beings of a ſuperior order.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER III.

Disorder'd praise,
The wish but half express'd, the ardent gaze,
The varying cheek, the frequent smother'd sigh,
Reveal'd the latent meaning of his eye.

ANNA SEWARD.

AT the time of Charles's leaving College, he had juſt completed his twenty-firſt year; Frederick Blandford being then nineteen; Juliana, ſeventeen; and Amelia in her eighteenth year.

Frederick had been at the ſame ſchool as Charles, but inſtead of removing him to College for the finiſhing of his education, Mr. Blandford ſent him abroad at ſixteen, purpoſing that he ſhould travel till he came of age. With him went the Rev. Mr. Dawkins, as his travelling tutor; a gentleman who had been

been uſher at the Priory, while he was a ſcholar there, and who had inſinuated himſelf very much into his favour.

The two young ladies were educated at home by their aunt, and living thus together from their infancy, had grown up in the ſtrongeſt friendſhip for each other; a friendſhip which even remained unſhaken through the great trial of coming out into the world together, when rivalſhip, particularly amongſt the female ſex, will often diſſolve the ties of childhood.

But to any idea of rivalſhip their hearts were perfect ſtrangers. The ſuperiority of beauty was certainly on Amelia's ſide, for beauty ſuch as her's could ſcarcely be exceeded.

Where'er she turn'd her soul-subduing gaze,
Th' observer faulter'd, but he faulter'd praise;
Her form was perfect as the finish'd piece,
The boast of Florence now, as once of Greece.
MERRY.

To this perfection of form and features was added an expreſſion which beſpoke a reflecting mind, and the utmoſt ſweetneſs and ſenſibility;

ſibility: ſhe had indeed a caſt of ſerioufneſs on her countenance; but as it was evidently not the reſult of dullneſs and ſtupidity, but of a diſpoſition to ſtudioufneſs and obſervation, it rather increaſed than diminiſhed the general impreſſion of her beauty.

Juliana, on the other hand, was all life and animation, and if her features were not ſo fine and regularly formed as thoſe of Amelia, the vivacity, which inſpired them, rendered her ſcarcely leſs attractive than her friend; while, at the ſame time, ſhe was perfectly free from thoſe pert and flippant manners, which young ladies are too often apt to miſtake for livelineſs, but which are as unlike the thing they wiſh to imitate, as the would-be humour of ſome modern play-writers, to the incomparable effuſions of the genius of a Shakſpeare, which have ſo often "*ſet an audience in a roar.*"

Thus theſe two charming young friends formed a moſt intereſting contraſt, and contributed to ſet each other off to ſtill greater advantage; nor did thoſe who were ſo happy as to be acquainted with them, know whether moſt to admire, the perfection of loveli-

neſs

neſs in the one, or the faſcinating naïveté of the other. But what, perhaps, rendered them even more intereſting than their mere perſonal attractions, was the perfect attachment that ſubſiſted between them, ſo that each contented to ſhare the admiration of the world with the other, never harboured for a moment, the ſelfiſh wiſh to engroſs it wholly to herſelf; but, on the contrary, the one ſcarcely appeared gratified by attentions ſhewn to herſelf alone, but ſeemed to claim an equal portion for her friend.

That two ſuch amiable creatures ſhould be objects of Charles Meadows's warmeſt admiration was highly natural; and that he, accompliſhed as he has been repreſented, ſhould be no ſmall favourite both with them and their aunt, was equally ſo; perhaps it would have been unnatural that he ſhould have remained equally attached to both, nor fixed his affections particularly on one. For ſome time, however, it did not appear to the world in general that he actually had done ſo; he paid them almoſt equal attention, and that of the moſt pleaſing kind, neither behaving to

them with a forward and diſguſting familiarity, nor with an aukward and embarraſſed reſerve.

But as the before-mentioned world always chuſes to arrange all theſe matters, ſo they ſettled that he certainly would at laſt fix his affections entirely on Miſs Blandford, whoſe livelineſs was better ſuited to his diſpoſition than the more ſerious turn of Miſs St. Aubyn. Juliana had beſides another charm, much more powerful than any of which Amelia could boaſt, in being ſole heireſs to her mother's fortune, which at her marriage was ſettled on her younger children, and conſequently, at her death, devolved entirely on her daughter; and as the power of Plutus is generally conſidered as much more extenſive than that of Cupid himſelf, ſo it was agreed that this circumſtance would decide the affair in Charles's mind; while Mr. Blandford was ſuppoſed to be ſo blinded by his partiality to him, that he would not even refuſe him his daughter. Nay, ſome perſons, more deep in the ſecret than the reſt, pronounced authoritatively that Mr. Blandford, who was a very odd man, had actually educated Charles

and

and Amelia after his own way, with a view to their future alliance with his ſon and daughter.

This arrangement was no doubt extremely ingenious, but, unfortunately, the parties concerned did not fall into the plan with the ſame readineſs with which it had been formed for them. Indeed, even at the very time when Charles was ſuppoſed to be quite undecided, the real object of his affections, the lovely Amelia, was much better informed on the ſubject, and by a thouſand trifling and almoſt imperceptible ways, which a devoted lover will always find for conveying intimations of his ſentiments, where he wiſhes to make them known, he had ſufficiently convinced her, that his heart was wholly and ſolely at her diſpoſal.

This attachment had indeed grown, almoſt inſenſibly to himſelf, to a very great height before he left college, and when he was afterwards thrown ſtill more in her way, it became every day more deeply rooted in his heart, and prognoſticated but too ſurely that it was to be hereafter the polar ſtar which ſhould guide and influence all his actions. He reſolved, however, not to open his mind fully

to her till he ſhould be ſettled in the world, when their engagement could be completed as ſoon as entered into. With this view, he had hitherto confined himſelf entirely to ſilent tokens for the communication of his paſſion, which, ardent as it was, could be content with theſe, while he found them received in ſuch a manner as to give him the moſt reaſonable hopes that the lady was not inſenſible to, or diſpleaſed with them, but that when he ſhould preſent his ſuit in due form, it would meet with a reception conformable to his wiſhes. While Amelia, on her ſide, regarded the manner in which ſhe received her lover's advances, as ſuch a ſanction to them, and ſo far binding on her future conduct, that, without a word having paſſed between them on the ſubject, they conſidered themſelves as much engaged to each other, as if their contract had been ratified by the moſt ſolemn exchange of vows.

Thus far all was well, and fortune had ſmiled propitious on our hero. He had led a perfectly regular life from the time of his quitting the Univerſity, nor had he appeared for a moment to look back with deſire or regret,

gret, to the ſcenes which, while they were paſſing, had ſo completely faſcinated him.—Thus he grew daily more and more into favor with his patron, who determined without delay to put the finiſhing ſtroke to all the kindneſs he had ſhewn him, by making the proper arrangements for ſecuring him a permanent proviſion for the reſt of his life. He had a very valuable living in Warwickſhire in his gift, on which was an incumbent upwards of ninety years of age, whom he meant Charles ſhould ſucceed, and he determined immediately to make a will which ſhould ſecure the living to him in caſe of his own death before it ſhould become vacant. It was alſo his intention to ſettle an annuity upon him till he ſhould come into poſſeſſion of the living, and to preſent him with a thouſand pounds to ſet out with, thus making him perfectly independent. But, alas! before theſe benevolent deſigns could be carried into execution, a dreadful and moſt unexpected ſtroke put an end to them in a moment, and threw the object of them on the world, a deſolate and wretched being.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER IV.

Cóntra gli assalti di Nettun spumánti
Quando Austro a sdégno ed Aquilóne il móve
E cóntra i lampi e'l fulminar di Giove
Ha l'ingegno mortale ónde si vánti.

Ma cóntra i cólpi délla fálce oscúra
Che àrma di mórte l'implacábil máno
Inváno ingegno s'affatica, inváno
Stame di vita contrastar procura.

CHIABRERA.

THE event alluded to was, alas! the death of Mr. Blandford himself, who, like the benignant sun-beams, which, when cheering and animating the face of nature, are suddenly obscured by black and malignant vapours, was in one moment taken off, by a fall from his horse, as he was riding out on a very fine summer's evening, when no one was present to witness the horrid catastrophe.

Riding

Riding was an exerciſe of which he was particularly fond, and, diſliking form, he never took a ſervant with him, ſo that unleſs he had a friend to accompany him, his rides were always ſolitary. Charles, when ſtaying at Sherborne, (as he was at this time) was commonly his companion; but it happened that the horſe he was accuſtomed to ride was lame, ſo that he had taken a walk with the ladies, from which he was juſt returned; and on their going into the houſe, he intended to ſaunter a little way down a lane by which Mr. Blandford frequently came home, in the hope of meeting him. But, ah! how was he ſtruck with horror, when on going out of the garden-gate which led to this lane, he ſaw the horſe of his patron galloping towards him without his rider.

Such an object was ſufficient to alarm him with the idea of what had really happened; and he was the more confirmed in it, when, in a moment after, a dog, who always went out with Mr. Blandford, came running to him, and looked piteouſly in his face as if to entreat him to come to his maſter's aſſiſtance.

Charles immediately called to two ſervants, who were near, to follow him, and then ſet off himſelf, running down the lane, the dog keeping before him all the way, till, when they had gotten near two miles from the houſe, they arrived at the ſpot where Mr. Blandford lay, a ſhocking ſpectacle indeed.

He had fallen with his head againſt a ſharp ſtone, ſo that the ſcull was completely cleft through, and a terrible effuſion of blood had followed. The firſt glance at his ſituation ſpoke too plainly to Charles that aſſiſtance was vain. He determined, however, that nothing ſhould be wanting on his part, to preſerve if poſſible ſo valuable a life. He ran, or rather flew, to the houſ of Mr. Martin, a ſurgeon, at about half a mile's diſtance, whom he found at home, and who immediately accompanied him to the fatal ſpot; but only to confirm the melancholy truth, that the vital principle, which had once animated the beſt of men, was extinguiſhed for ever.

Charles, almoſt diſtracted, then deſired Mr. Martin to proceed to Sherborne, to break the diſaſtrous tidings to Mrs. St. Aubyn and her nieces,

nieces, and to ſend the carriage to convey the corpſe to the houſe, by the ſide of which he would himſelf watch till it ſhould arrive. With this requeſt Mr. Martin immediately complied, and arrived at Sherborne before any idea of the accident had reached the ladies, only they had been rather ſurprized that Mr. Blandford continued his ride ſo much later than he was in general accuſtomed.

Diſaſters of the ſame nature with that now before us are, alas! not ſo rare, but that moſt perſons have, at ſome period of their lives, experienced ſomething ſimilar, and will therefore be able to imagine, much better than I can deſcribe, the effect which the intelligence communicated by Mr. Martin muſt have on Mrs. St. Aubyn, Juliana, and Amelia! The firſt burſt of agony with them had but juſt began to ſubſide, when the arrival of Charles with the body, brought on another paroxyſm of anguiſh, more violent if poſſible than the former; too violent indeed to admit of any one ſpeaking, or indeed to permit their continuing together, and Charles broke away from them, to indulge in ſolitude, in his own

apartment, feelings which harrowed up his ſoul.

And though not by the ties of blood connected with the deceaſed, yet even thoſe who were the moſt nearly ſo, and whom his amiable manners, even more than thoſe ties, had tenderly attached to him, could feel this cataſtrophe ſo deeply as our hero. Warm and impetuous in his temper, whatever he did was done with ardour; and the uniform kindneſs ſhewn him by his patron acting on ſuch a temper, wrought up his attachment to him to a degree almoſt amounting to idolatry; thus his death ſeemed to have made a blank in the creation, which no other object could ſupply. As he paſſed the ſupper-room, in the way to his chamber, the door being left open, he beheld all things ready prepared for ſupper; the arm chair, in which Mr. Blandford had been accuſtomed to ſit, placed as uſual at the bottom of the table, and by it the dog who attended him as regularly at his meals as in his rides, and who, loſt to all remembrance of the cataſtrophe which he only had witneſſed, was wagging his tail, as if expecting his maſter's

arrival

arrival every moment. This was too much; it added to the eagerneſs with which he ruſhed up ſtairs, where he threw himſelf on the bed in an agony too great to find relief from tears.

He paſſed the night ſometimes thus extended on the bed, ſometimes pacing his room with hurried ſteps, and at length, at the dawn of morning, left the houſe, ſcarcely knowing whither he intended to go, or what he intended to do; and leaving chance to direct his courſe, walked on with folded arms, downcaſt eyes, and penſive ſteps, till at length he perceived himſelf to be at the very ſpot where, the evening before, he had found the corpſe of his benefactor.

He could proceed no farther; he leaned againſt a tree with his eyes fixed on the ſtone which had given the fatal blow, and whoſe ſtill enſanguined hue ſpake the cataſtrophe of which it had been the inſtrument; and thus he remained a fixed ſtatue of morbid melancholy, inſenſible to every thing but the one object which filled his ſoul, till he was rouſed from his lethargy by a voice which pathetically addreſſed him, "Charles, my ſon!"

He turned round; he beheld the venerable countenance of his father, on which ſorrow had engraven her moſt expreſſive lines; — he threw his arms round his neck, and, for the firſt time, his agony was relieved by a torrent of tears.

"Charles!" ſaid the good man again; — it was all he could utter, and he mingled his tears with thoſe of his ſon.

Charles quitted his hold; he walked a few paces in a frantic manner, and then threw himſelf on the ground, while his wounded ſoul ſeemed ready to take its flight for ever. His father knelt down by him, and taking his hand, preſſed it affectionately to his boſom, repeating again, — "my ſon!". But, alas, his ſon was inſenſible to him. He lay for ſome time motionleſs, and then ſtarted up haſtily, exclaiming, — "'Tis over! 'tis reſolved!" — while his countenance was expreſſive only of the wildeſt deſpair.

"Ah! what is reſolved?" cried the anxious father. "Charles! my ſon, my deareſt child!"

"Oh! what ſhould I reſolve on! — what, but to devote the reſt of my days to ſacred, ſolitary

ſolitary regret, for the loſs of one whoſe virtues ſhould have rendered him immortal!—What does the world contain now worth caring for? Why then remain in the world?—No, let me ſeek that gloomy receſs whence he firſt drew us; and ——— But wherefore drag on exiſtence any longer? Is the thread of life ſo hard to ſnap, and why heſitate to break it, when happineſs is at an end?"

"Charles, Charles! my dear, dear boy!—do not talk thus!—aim a dagger at my heart, but do not kill me with thy words!"

"Kill you, my father!—heaven forbid!—wherefore I ſhould kill you?—you are not miſerable, elſe it would be kindneſs!"

"Yes, Charles, I am miſerable,—we are all miſerable,—we have all loſt a generous friend, a noble benefactor;—but is that a ſufficient reaſon for abandoning ourſelves to a vain and weak deſpair?—oh, no—it is our duty, our ſacred ſolemn duty, to bear it with patience;—come then, be comforted!"

"Patience!—preach it to the winds!—no, no, I will cheriſh deſpair, it is the only inmate which can now be welcome to my breaſt;

breaſt;—in wilds and deſarts will I cheriſh it, till it ſhall join me to the dear departed."

"Thy father then ſhall be forſaken,—thy aged mother too,—all ties, all connections, broken through!"

"My father forſaken!—my mother forſaken!"—and he threw his arms again around the venerable man's neck. All recollection of other ties, had for a moment been buried in the idea of that which was ſo recently burſt aſunder; but his wandering ideas once recalled, he wept for awhile the exceſs into which he had been hurried, and kiſſing the hand of his parent—"Oh, my father," he tenderly and pathetically exclaimed, "you have reſtored me to myſelf!—Oh, and could I think for a moment of deſerting that venerable form, and in mourning one friend cut off, forget how many remain behind!—Come, come, I will grieve no more!—No more!—yes, I will grieve ſtill!—I muſt—'tis but his due;—but I will reſtrain it within juſt bounds—I will compoſe myſelf.—Whither were you going, my father?"

"To Sherborne, to mingle my ſorrows with

with thoſe of the mourners there. — You will return with me?"

"Can I return thither! — I thought I had left that houſe for ever!"

"And why left it for ever?"

"There is no Mr. Blandford there now!"

"But there are other friends, and 'tis your duty to endeavour to conſole them. Return then with me!"

"Yes, I will return, — but not to conſole them, for how can one ſo miſerable himſelf, conſole another? — But I will return, to take one laſt ſad look at that ſenſeleſs form which, when animated, poſſeſſed every virtue that could ennoble human nature! — and — but let me not think — thought is diſtraction!"

Mr. Meadows took hold of his arm, and led him on, gently expoſtulating with him againſt giving way to ſuch extravagant ſorrow, till at length, by the time they arrived at the houſe, he had reaſoned him into a ſtate of tolerable compoſure.

THE RECTOR's SON.

CHAPTER V.

But most to him shall Mem'ry prove a curse
Who meets capricious fortune's hard reverse,
. . . . . .
Glows not a flow'r, nor pants a vernal breeze,
As in his hours of affluence and ease;
While ev'ry luxury that the world displays,
Wounds him afresh, and tells of better days.

MERRY.

AS in the midſt of the ſwelling ſtorm, when the winds are roaring around, and the raging billows aſcend in mountains to the ſkies, ſuddenly the roar ceaſes, the noiſe of the waves is huſhed, and the elements, for a moment, are lulled into a profound calm, while hope that danger is paſt, inſpires the breaſt of the before-affrighted mariner, — a hope, of which the next moment proves the fallacy,

fallacy, for the winds and the ſeas pauſe but to return again to the conflict with redoubled fury:—ſo it was with the tempeſt that had agitated the ſoul of Charles Meadows, which ſubſided but to be renewed again with greater violence than ever.

He, with his father, arrived at Sherborne, juſt as the ladies were aſſembled in the breakfaſt room, after a night ſpent in the moſt poignant affliction; and Mrs. St. Aubyn was juſt enquiring of the ſervants after him, and alarmed at hearing he was not to be found. Many hours had now elapſed ſince the fate of Mr. Blandford was known, in all which time, the idea of Amelia (at other times ſcarcely ever abſent from the thoughts of Charles) had never once occurred to him;—but he now beheld her; ſhe was intruded on him involuntarily; and with her, a thouſand other ideas ruſhed on his mind, all tending to aggravate, none to leſſen, the anguiſh that preyed upon him.

It was now that he firſt felt that he was left deſtitute! that he muſt look up to her no more! and the thought was diſtraction—far

too

too much to ſuſtain, when added to his other feelings; and he hurried out of the room, his father following, diſtreſſed to the laſt degree, at beholding this freſh burſt of paſſion. He purſued his way to an alcove in the garden, where he threw himſelf down, and where his father arriving a moment after, again addreſſed him. "Oh, Charles, Charles, are you then determined to be the death of your parent? Why this freſh paroxyſm of anguiſh?"

"Why, my father? Oh! is ſhe not loſt to me for ever?"

"Is not who loſt?"

"The deareſt treaſure of my ſoul—my adored Amelia!"

"Alas! and is it then ſo? Is there indeed ſuch a cauſe to aggravate your ſorrows;—but I have often feared it!"

"Feared what?"

"Feared that you loved Miſs St. Aubyn."

"And wherefore feared it? Oh, had my patron lived, ſhe would have been proud to own a paſſion for me!—but now deſtitute, poor, forlorn,—"

"And why ſuppoſe thus of a heart which ſeems

ſeems not formed for ficklenеſs or levity? Why be thus ingenious to torment yourſelf? Why, too, think yourſelf deſtitute? Has not your departed friend left a ſon; he"—

"What! would you have me crouch to the boy? Cringe to one who always treated me with indifference while my proſpects were brilliant, and now that they are changed, will treat me with ſcorn! Shall I condeſcend to be obliged to *him*?"

"Nor, perhaps, will that be neceſſary; your patron's kindneſs may have extended beyond the grave; — his will"—

"'Tis true; — yet he is gone, and how can I enjoy his bounty?"

"And are my recent leſſons ſo ſoon forgotten?"

"Oh! no, no, no, my father, they ſhall be remembered; I will not ſuffer theſe unmanly feelings to overpower me; I will learn to be a Stoic, for in ſuch inſenſibility alone can I now find refuge."

"Ah, Charles, how much does the impatience with which you expreſs your reſolution, contradict the reſolution itſelf!"

"How

"How kind your admonitions, my father; 'tis true, but now I will indeed be calm:—let us return again to the company, whom I left so abruptly; I think I can now trust myself."

They returned — they breakfasted — this once cheerful meeting passed in mournful silence, for who could speak on any other subject but the single one which occupied them? and what was talking on that, but adding to the distress which all seemed *willing*, *no one able*, to repress?

When it was concluded, Mrs. St. Aubyn hinted to Juliana, as to the person most nearly concerned, that it would be proper to search immediately for the will of the deceased, as he might have left orders which it would be necessary should be attended to without delay. Miss Blandford, in reply, requested that her aunt and Mr. Meadows would undertake the search; which they did, but after having looked in every place in which it was probable that one might be deposited, to their utter astonishment, no such thing was to be found.

Still, Mrs. St. Aubyn, who knew how extremely

tremely exact her brother was in all matters of buſineſs, and had often heard him reprobate thoſe perſons who might delay making a will under the idea that it was time enough, and that they had yet many years to live, while no one could depend on his life for a ſingle day, could not conceive it poſſible that he had ſuffered himſelf to be overtaken by the hand of death thus unprepared, and ſhe propoſed queſtioning Mr. Horton, the ſteward, on the ſubject, as he was as much the confidential friend as the ſervant of his maſter, and might probably know where he had been accuſtomed to keep a deed of ſo much importance.

Mr. Horton had, for more than fifty years, filled the important office of ſteward to the owners of Sherborne Houſe, with unexampled honeſty and integrity, and had given a good education to a large family, entirely by the exertions of his own induſtry; for which he was rewarded by ſeeing them all reſpectable, and reſpected, in their ſeveral ſituations. He was attached to Mr. Blandford with a degree of reverence almoſt amounting

to

to adoration; and to the child of Mr. Blandford's adoption, with an affection not leſs than what he felt towards his own children. His one foible through life had been, a paſſionate love of talking; and advanced in years as he now was, he was become more "narrative with age" than even Antenor or Ucalegon themſelves. An auditor who could liſten to his long ſtories with patience, and now and then ſupply a *yes* or a *no*, was the moſt grateful recompence for his honeſt and induſtrious life that the gods could ſend him; and this patient auditor he had frequently found in Charles Meadows, who, by thus indulging him, repaid all the kindneſs which as a child he had experienced at his hands.

When he was queſtioned if he knew whether Mr. Blandford had left a will, he ſhook his head, and anſwered, that he was afraid he had not; but if one were left, it was probably in the hands of Mr. Smyth, an attorney, at Shrewſbury, who had been his agent in all his law concerns; and looking at Charles with his eyes full of tears, he left the room.

Mr. Smyth was immediately ſent for, but came

came only to confirm the Steward's apprehenſions. He ſaid, that he had lately, by Mr. Blandford's orders, drawn him up a new will, in conſequence of ſome arrangements which he wiſhed to make relative to Mr. Charles Meadows; and this will had been actually ready for execution ten days before; when Mr. Blandford came over to Shrewſbury for that purpoſe, deſtroying his former will in the morning before he ſet out. But when the new one was read, he ſuddenly recollected ſome circumſtances relative to the eſtate which he had ſubjected to the payment of Mr. Meadows's annuity, which occaſioned a doubt whether it could be ſo tied down; and for greater ſecurity, h had determined to ſettle the annuity in a different manner: this alteration had occaſioned a delay, owing to which it now moſt unfortunately happened, that he died without any will at all.

Charles heard, at firſt, the ſentence of poverty thus paſſed on him, without any other emotion than that of increaſed adoration of his patron, for the exceſs of anxiety which he

had ſhewn on his account; but turning to Amelia, he met her eyes, which were fixed on him with an expreſſion of the moſt tender and affectionate concern. This was a declaration of the feelings of her heart, which, under proſperous circumſtances, would have made him the happieſt of men; but which, in ſuch a moment, only ſerved to increaſe the anguiſh of that eternal ſeparation, which he now felt to be his hard but indiſpenſable duty. He had rejoiced in the proſpect of fortune, only in the idea that ſhe was to ſhare it with him; and determined that ſhe ſhould never ſhare his poverty, yet overpowered with the thoughts of loſing her, he was relapſing faſt into another paroxyſm of wild deſpair. His father ſaw it, the cauſe appeared obvious, and he drew him out of the room, and out of the way of thoſe regards which were ſo dangerous. Satisfied now, too, that his continuance at Sherborne was a thing to be avoided, rather than wiſhed, he no longer oppoſed his going to Milſingtown; for which place he accordingly ſet out, and ſought, in the affectionate boſoms of his family,

family, the conſolation of which he ſtood ſo much in need.

An expreſs was immediately ſent off to Paris, where Frederick Blandford had been reſident for ſome time, to inform him of the melancholy death of his father, and to deſire his preſence in England as ſpeedily as poſſible. He loſt no time in complying with this ſummons, and arrived at Sherborne, accompanied by his tutor, Mr. Dawkins, only eight days after the expreſs had left it.

Every thing having been prepared for the funeral, that ceremony was appointed to take place on the day following his arrival, and a card was ſent, in all due form, to Mr. Meadows and his ſon Charles, among others, requeſting their attendance, with an offer of beds, as it would be probably late before it would be over; for, in order to make as much parade as poſſible, Frederick had determined that it ſhould be performed by torch light.

This invitation was accepted, rather reluctantly, by the father; but the ſon poſitively refuſed to go and mingle his unalterable de-

ſpair, with the factitious concern of thoſe who grieve by rule, and whoſe hearts feel no ſhare in the ſadneſs which they endeavour to make their countenances aſſume. His ſacred ſorrow, he ſaid, ſhould be united with ſuch as mourned in reality, and he would mix in the croud, and join their genuine expreſſions of feeling for the loſs of one, who had been a father, as well as landlord, to his tenants.

He went therefore and concealed himſelf behind a tree in the park, which grew by the ſide of the road along which the proceſſion was to paſs, and thence ſtole unperceived amongſt the croud, with whom he entered the church, and got as near the grave as he could, without being obſerved by thoſe whoſe notice he wiſhed to eſcape.—A ſolemn anthem, ſuited to the occaſion, was ſung—the whole aſſembly joined in the chorus; it was a burſt of grateful, ſorrowful, feeling towards their friend and benefactor—all joined except Charles Meadows, he could not utter a note. He ſtole into a pew unobſerved, and there laid himſelf down, reſolved to feed his romantic melancholy with ſpending the night

in

in the church, dark, and alone, on the grave where all his happineſs was buried. He waited with impatience the moment that was to releaſe him from irkſome ſociety, while each footſtep that paſſed the door of the church, in departing from it after the ceremony was over, ſeemed a load of miſery taken from off his boſom; and at length, when he heard the doors grate on their hinges, and clap together with a hollow noiſe which the echoes reverberated through the lengthened aiſles, he welcomed the ſound with not leſs ardour than the wretched captive does that of unlocking the ſtrongly barred portal, through which he is to paſs from his loathſome dungeon, to behold again the fair face of nature, and breathe wholeſome air once more.

He roſe up, he felt his way to the yet but half filled chaſm, into which he ſprung, and throwing himſelf with his face to the earth, he lay ſtill and inſenſible as the corpſe beneath him, till, after a ſhort time, he was rouſed by hearing a key thruſt into a little private door cloſe by, which was uſed only by the Squire's family. He ſtarted up, he ſprung

out of the grave, and, looking towards the door, he ſaw it open, and beheld the figure of his beloved Amelia enter, with a ſmall lanthorn in her hand. She perceived him not immediately, but advanced towards the altar, on the rails round which, ſhe placed her light, and was turning round to proceed to the grave, when ſhe found herſelf in the arms of a man.

Had Charles been at that moment perfectly maſter of his feelings, he muſt have ſeen the hazard he ran by ſo haſty a diſcovery of himſelf to the fair object, in whoſe way he had been thus unexpectedly thrown—but this was not a moment for recollection. He had been wrought by circumſtances into a ſtate, if not of abſolute phrenzy, at leaſt of ſomething very diſtant from perfect ſanity, when Amelia was thus preſented to him, after he had determined never to ſee her more. His imagination, always romantic, was inſtantaneouſly in a blaze, and, almoſt without knowing what he did, his extended arms received her.

Happily for him, her mind was too ſtrongly fortified by reaſon for any attacks from ſuperſtition

perſtition to ſhake it, or this indiſcretion in her lover might have proved fatal to her. But the mind which could arm itſelf againſt vain and fooliſh terror, ſo as to enter the church alone, in a night ſo dark that, even with the help of her lanthorn, ſhe could not find her way thither without difficulty, was not to be alarmed with the fear of any thing ſupernatural, and, perhaps, the firſt idea that preſented itſelf to her, might not be very far from the truth. She gave an involuntary ſtart, on finding that ſhe was not alone, and fixed her eyes on the half-diſtracted Charles with a countenance perfectly expreſſive of the emotions of her ſoul; and on which aſtoniſhment, love, a kind of patient deſpondency, yet mingled with a degree of terror, were painted in the moſt forcible characters; and in this attitude they remained for ſome minutes, before either had the power of uttering a ſyllable. Amelia at length exclaimed, "Good God! you here, Mr. Meadows! I hoped I had been alone!"

"Yes, Amelia, it is I!—where elſe ſhould I be now?—do not theſe walls contain ——."

More he could not utter, his expreſſive eyes ſpoke the reſt, while he preſſed her to his boſom with a frantic tranſport of love and anguiſh — and again they were ſilent for ſome minutes. Then eſſaying to ſpeak, "Amelia!" he ſaid.

"Oh, Mr. Meadows!"

"Amelia! — I think you love me?"

"Heaven knows, with the pureſt affection."

"We had once a friend."

"A friend indeed."

"It is hard to part with him. Such virtue ſhould have been immortal."

"Let us unite our tears over his grave."

"I came but to weep! — Amelia! — would to God we had not met thus!"

"Let us part then."

"You wiſh to leave me?"

"I thought that you wiſhed me to be gone!"

"Wiſhed to part from you, Amelia? — how could I bear that? to loſe all that the world contains of value for me? Is not the

loſs

loſs of one friend enough?—muſt I loſe all?—all?——"

"Why ſhould you think of that?"

"You will not then deſert me?"

"Oh do not ſuppoſe that I could be capable of ſuch baſeneſs!—and yet, Mr. Meadows,——"

"Ah, what?"

"I know not whether I ought to bleſs, or curſe, the moment which has brought us to this explanation."

The ſtroke of the benumbing torpedo cannot produce a more inſtantaneous ſuſpenſion of faculties to him who may receive it, than the word *curſe*, thus pronounced by the object of his adoration, produced on the agitated Charles. He felt that all the reſolutions he had formed, with regard to her, were overturned in one unguarded moment, that, though a beggar, he had dared to own himſelf her lover, and to aſk a return of affection, he felt that honour could ſleep while love was but too much awake, and he deſpiſed himſelf. His arms, which before had tenderly encircled her, dropped lifeleſs by his ſide, and

they ſtood with their eyes fixed on each other, in attitudes, and with an expreſſion of countenance, to which painting only could do juſtice, when the door once more opened, and Horton, the ſteward, appeared.

He was then on his return home from Mr. Blandford's, and, as he paſſed the church, which lay directly in his way, he was ſurprized by ſeeing a glimmering light there, which the exceſſive darkneſs of the night rendered very perceptible; and fearful, either that ſome perſon had been accidentally ſhut in, or that a ſpark from one of the torches might have ſet the building on fire, he entered to ſatisfy himſelf what was the matter. But, when he diſcovered the truth, he added a third to the groupe of expreſſive intereſt and aſtoniſhment.

As ſoon as he had recovered the firſt emotions of ſurprize, he approached Charles, and, taking his hand, ſaid, "My dear young man, why will you afflict yourſelf thus? come, let me lead you away; you ſhall go home with me, where I will do all in my power to conſole you. And you, my dear lady," he added,

ed, turning to Amelia, "is this a fit place for ſo ſweet a creature to paſs the night in?—Come, come, pray let me lead you both to a ſcene of leſs horror!"

The good old man ſpoke with an affectionate anxiety, which Charles, diſtracted as he was, could not reſiſt. "Well then, I will be ruled by you," he ſaid, "you ſhall conduct that angel back, and I will go to your houſe, and remain there till the morning." And, ſo ſaying, he ruſhed out of the church, and went to the ſteward's houſe, where he threw himſelf down on the bed, ſcarcely knowing where he was, or what he did.

Horton, in the mean time, ſupported Amelia back to Sherborne Houſe, and conſigned her to the care of her aunt, whoſe tenderneſs ſoon ſoothed her into ſome degree of compoſure. He then went to Mr. Meadows's apartment, to whom he related the ſcene of which he had been a witneſs, and entreated him to go with him, and endeavour to compoſe his ſon's mind.

Shocked and alarmed at this freſh inſtance of its diſordered ſtate, Mr. Meadows roſe up

immediately, and accompanied the ſteward, when they found Charles in the ſituation above deſcribed, in a kind of ſenſeleſs calm, in which phyſical ſtupor ſeemed in ſome meaſure to ſupply the place of moral tranquillity. An attempt to have reaſoned with him, under ſuch circumſtances, would have been as ineffectual as to have made the like attempt with the turbulent ocean, when agitated by the boiſterous whirlwind. Of this the unhappy father was perfectly aware, and he ſat down therefore by the ſide of his ſon, to watch for a favourable moment, when the voice of conſolation and admonition might hope to find their way to his boſom.

It was not, however, till after a lapſe of ſome hours that he came at all to himſelf; then, ſuddenly ſtarting up, and ſeeing his father ſitting by him, he ſeized his hand, and eagerly cried, "You here, my father! come then, let us depart; I cannot bear to be ſo near her, I would hide myſelf from her and from all the world!"

"Yes, we will go.—But, my ſon, you are ill—you are weak—you cannot walk to Milſingtown;

Milſingtown;—let me go and aſk for Mr. Blandford's carriage."

"Aſk for Mr. Blandford's carriage!—No, ſooner would I die by the way than get into it. I am very well—indeed I am—let us go home, I entreat.—I am afraid I have already alarmed my mother and ſiſters by my long abſence."

"Well, we will go then.—But firſt I would return to Mr. Blandford's, to make an apology for my abrupt departure. Your worthy friend, Mr. Horton, will ſtay with you while I am gone."

"Yes, good old man, let him come to me.—I ought to thank him for all his kindneſs; and, by the time you come back, my father, I ſhall be quite compoſed, quite fit to accompany you."

Mr. Meadows departed, and the ſteward took his place by the ſide of Charles, with whom he entered into a long converſation, on his preſent ſituation and future proſpects, and amuſed him with many ſtories of young men who, in circumſtances far more hopeleſs than his, had yet ſtruggled through their difficulties,

ties, and become at laſt great and wealthy men; and he exhorted him to ſhake off his deſpondency, and rouſe himſelf to active exertion, ſo might he at laſt arrive at a ſituation as happy as that which had ſo recently vaniſhed from his hopes. To all which the young man liſtened attentively, and with a determination to follow advice, the wiſdom of which he could not but feel.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER VI.

Alete è l'un, che da principio indegno.
Tra le brutture de la plebe è sorto
Ma l'inalzaro a i primi honor del regno
Parlar facondo, e lusinghiero, e scorto
Pieghevoli costumi, e vario ingegno,
Al finger pronto, à l'ingannare accorto.

TASSO.

As we have now seen Charles, for the second time, break out into expressions of indignation at the mention of young Blandford's name, for which no adequate cause has yet appeared, it will be proper to assign a reason for them, first presenting our readers with a sketch of Mr. Dawkins's character.

He was, in his origin, the only child of a little shopkeeper, in a small town in one of the midland counties of England, whose prime ambition

ambition was to educate his ſon as a gentleman; and, in order to ſave the money neceſſary for this purpoſe, he ſcarcely allowed even the common neceſſaries to himſelf and his wife. Young Dawkins received the early part of his education at a free-ſchool in the town where his father lived, and at eighteen was entered as a Sizar in the Univerſity of Cambridge; a ſituation extremely well calculated to repreſs the true dignity of human nature, and form the mind to habits of ſervility and low cunning, in both of which he ſoon made a very great proficiency.

He had been eſtabliſhed as Uſher at the Priory a ſhort time before Frederick Blandford was placed at that ſchool, and from the moment of the latter's arrival there, turned his whole attention to courting his favour, as he was heir to the largeſt fortune of any boy in the ſchool. In this attempt he ſucceeded ſo well, that Frederick every day grew more and more partial to him; ſo that when he went abroad, he made it his earneſt requeſt to his father, that he might accompany him as his travelling tutor. A requeſt with which Mr. Blandford

Blandford the more readily complied, as Mr. Dawkins had inſinuated himſelf, in no ſmall degree, into his favour as well as his ſon's.

In fact, he was one who might have deceived even a more diſcerning man than Mr. Blandford, who, however, was not deficient in penetration. Practiſed in the arts of flattery and deceit, attentive only to his own intereſt, and in promoting it wholly indifferent to the morality or immorality of the means he might purſue, he avoided many ſtumbling blocks which otherwiſe might have obſtructed the path of his advancement. He poſſeſſed, beſides, a perfect command of himſelf, as well as of words; ſo that he could always catch the happieſt moment, in which to make his offering at the ſhrine of *l'amour propre* of any one to whom he ſought to pay his court. And this was done with a delicacy ſo refined, and his flatteries were gloſſed over with ſo ſoft and ſmooth a varniſh, that it was ſcarcely poſſible not to be pleaſed with them, to how great a length ſoever they might be carried. Added to which, he had a good figure and a genteel and eaſy addreſs, together with a conſiderable

ſiderable ſhare of learning and a knowledge of the world, which enabled him to make himſelf a pleaſant and deſirable companion.

But with all his ſervility to perſons in higher ſtations than himſelf, he was equally haughty to thoſe whom he conſidered as his inferiors, and would treat with the moſt inſulting contempt any one whom he thought incapable of turning upon him; nor did he ever fail of making ſome ſervant or dependent, pay for every inſtance of compliance which he practiſed towards thoſe from whom, in the grand chain of human dependencies, he had any thing to hope for, or any thing to fear.

From the moment when he firſt began to gain a footing in Mr. Blandford's family, he regarded Charles Meadows with the jaundiced eye of jealouſy, and conſequently hated him moſt cordially; nor wiſhed for any thing more ardently than to ſee his aſpiring hopes from the favour of his patron, cruſhed to atoms. For this purpoſe, he uniformly endeavoured to inſinuate into Frederick's breaſt, as large a portion as poſſible of the gall which rankled

rankled in his own; and he knew ſo well how to ſucceed in any object which he had in view, that he ſoon made him aſſume a very diſtant and reſerved manner towards Charles, for which the latter could not in any way account.

It gave him, however, little uneaſineſs.—Gay, lively, ſweet-tempered, and obliging, he was beloved by every other boy in the ſchool, nor leſs by the maſter himſelf; and he ſcarcely felt the cool behaviour of one, while that of all the reſt was ſo much the reverſe. So little impreſſion indeed had it made on him, and ſo perfectly unconſcious was he of ever having given Frederick the ſlighteſt cauſe of offence, that when he left ſchool, which was a year before Frederick went abroad, he begged they might correſpond; and the peremptory refuſal to grant this requeſt, was the firſt thing that gave him full conviction how widely different the ſentiments of the father and ſon were towards him.

Nor was it by any means Dawkins's intention to reſt ſatisfied with alienating his pupil from Charles; he flattered himſelf that he

ſhould

ſhould be equally able to ruin him in Mr. Blandford's eſteem: and when he was at Sherborne, during the holidays, he often reconnoitred his ground with this view, but never found a weak part in which he could form his mine with effect. Indeed, when he went abroad, this part of his plan was of neceſſity poſtponed for a long time; yet he was far from deſpairing of its being eventually effected, eſpecially, as before his departure, he had the ſatisfaction of hearing of the extravagance into which Charles had launched at college, and which he hoped might accompliſh his purpoſe, without any farther efforts of his own.

During the whole time of their travels, it was one of Dawkins's principal objects to cultivate the prejudices which he had ſown in Frederick's mind, by freſh inſinuations artfully thrown in, whenever he thought the effect of the former ſeemed to be wearing away; till, at length, he fully convinced him that Charles was an artful and intriguing young man, whoſe apparently open and ingenuous diſpoſition, was a maſk worn to conceal

ceal the darkeſt deſigns,---no leſs than to undermine him in his father's affections, and procure him to be diſinherited, in hopes that he might himſelf be made heir to Mr. Blandford's fortune. Nay, farther, he ſaid he had the ſtrongeſt reaſon to believe, that he had laid a plan for marrying Miſs Blandford, as a means of ſtrengthening his claim to the fortune, of which he was reſolved at any rate to poſſeſs himſelf.

Returning to England with theſe impreſſions, it will not appear ſurpriſing that Frederick ſhould reſolve on an immediate ceſſation of intercourſe between his family and that of Mr. Meadows, after his father's funeral, at which he thought he could not, with any degree of plauſibility, avoid aſking them to attend: but, that over, it would be an eaſy matter to make them underſtand that they would no longer be welcome viſitors at Sherborne. Charles, indeed, had ſo much reaſon from Frederick's former conduct to ſuppoſe this would be the caſe, that it had perhaps ſome ſhare in influencing his peremptory re-

fuſal

fuſal to appear publicly to pay the laſt duties to his benefactor.

And now, to return to Mr. Meadows.—When he left his ſon, he haſtened immediately to Mr. Blandford's, where the firſt perſon he met with was Mr. Dawkins, who accoſted him:

"You are riſen betimes, Mr. Meadows."

"I am indeed, Sir, and have ſcarcely been in bed all night."

Really! and what may have made you and repoſe ſuch ſtrangers?"

"I have been with my ſon Charles, who is very ill. I ſuppoſe Mr. Blandford is not ſtirring yet?"

"That queſtion would be with more propriety aſked of his valet; it is no part of *my* buſineſs to attend Mr. Blandford's levé, and, if you are very anxious to know whether he is up, you had better ſeek for the ſervant."

"That is quite unneceſſary, as you, Mr. Dawkins, will perhaps be ſo obliging as to take charge of my apologies to Mr. Blandford for leaving his houſe ſo abruptly, without waiting to pay my reſpects to him; but my

ſon

ſon is in a ſituation which renders it highly expedient that I ſhould return home with him directly."

"Oh! what he has rather overſhot the mark in the fine romantic viſit he made to the grave of his deceaſed benefactor. Indeed, Mr. Meadows, I think your ſon would act a much wiſer part in ſeeking ſome means whereby to gain his livelihood, than in indulging in theſe eccentricities. One cannot wonder, however, that he is deeply affected with the loſs he has ſuſtained, for the deceaſed was certainly uncommonly liberal to him; very few perſons indeed would have exerciſed the ſame profuſion, and ſhewn the ſame attention, towards a mere humble dependent."

Mr. Meadows was almoſt ſtruck dumb with this addreſs. He had indeed been ſufficiently convinced, by Frederick's manner to him the evening before, that the cheriſhed dependents and friends of the father, would be no welcome inmates to the boſom of the ſon; but there was a brutality in the language which Dawkins had juſt held, and ſomething

ſo

ſo inſulting in the manner in which it was uttered, that he now ſaw plainly, not only that they were not to expect to meet with the ſame friendſhip which they had formerly experienced in that houſe, but were even to be driven from it with contumely and reproach; for he could not ſuppoſe that the tutor would have ventured to treat him in that way, if he had not had his cue from the pupil. He diſdained, however, to make any reply to ſuch an inſult, but turned his back, with a dignified contempt, on its author; and leaving a meſſage with one of the ſervants for Frederick and the ladies, returned immediately to Charles.

He had the ſatisfaction of finding him much more compoſed than when he left him, and they ſet off together, without delay, for Milſingtown, where they arrived without exchanging a word the whole way. The father's thoughts were occupied with the conviction now fully impreſſed on him, that the ſon whom he had hoped was ſo nobly provided for, was thrown back on his hands almoſt pennyleſs, and with no other fruit from

the apparently eligible connection he had formed, but an education which would make him feel more keenly the ſituation to which he was now reduced; and the mind of the ſon was no leſs occupied with the ſtories with which old Horton had been endeavouring to amuſe his diſtraction, and inſpire him with energy to overcome the adverſe fortune by which he was oppreſſed.

Their arrival at Milſingtown was hailed by Mrs. Meadows and her daughters with raptures inexpreſſible, for they had endured no ſmall degree of anxiety on Charles's account, who they knew had gone to attend the funeral, and who had ſaid at his departure that he ſhould return when it was over. His abſence therefore all night they could no way account for, but by the ſuppoſition that ſome accident had befallen him.

He endeavoured to compoſe himſelf, and to repay the affection of his mother and ſiſters with equal affection—but in vain; his mind was full of a thouſand diſtracting thoughts, and he could not attend to any thing elſe. He walked out as ſoon as breakfaſt was concluded;

cluded; he revolved in his mind various ſchemes for his future life, but could not fix on any ſuited to his ſituation; all required money to begin with, and for that he muſt rely upon his father, to whom he could not bear the idea of becoming burthenſome, and depriving him of a portion of what he conſidered as the right of his ſiſters. Several days thus paſſed on, he had formed a thouſand plans but rejected them all, and at length one morning, in a fit of deſpair, had thrown himſelf by the ſide of a rivulet in the garden, reſolved to reſume an idea formed in the firſt emotions of his anguiſh, of hiding himſelf for ever among the mountains which had formerly been the retreat of his parents, when he was rouſed to far different ideas by his father's approaching him with a letter, which he put into his hand, and which, he ſaid, a labourer had juſt brought, who reported that a man on horſeback gave it to him, telling him to give it to Mr. Charles Meadows, and then rode haſtily away.

Charles took the letter, and, opening it, read as follows: "A friend, who ſincerely

"wiſhes

" wiſhes the happineſs of Mr. Charles Mea-
" dows, hopes that he will accept the en-
" cloſed ſum; it comes from one 'who would
" give more but that the hand lacks means.'
" Small as it is, it is yet hoped that it may
" prove a ſource whence a rich ſtream of for-
" tune may hereafter flow; ſmaller ſums have
" been known to do great things in the hands
" of genius and enterprize." And theſe kind words encloſed Bank notes to the amount of three hundred pounds.

" And genius and enterprize ſhall be mine," ſaid Charles, ſtarting up; but then ſuddenly ſeeming to recollect himſelf, he put the papers back into his father's hand — " No," he ſaid, " I cannot tell whence theſe come, or what ſervility may be expected in return for them, — take them back then, I will have none of them; they may come from one from whom I ſhould ſcorn to receive a favour."

" And wherefore, Charles, would you be thus ingenious to torment yourſelf; can you doubt who are the authors of a deed like this? Miſs Blandford, or Mrs. St. Aubyn, I know of no others capable of it."

" 'Tis true, 'tis very true, it muſt be from them, and to them I ſhall never feel reluctant to owe an obligation." He then took them again from Mr. Meadows, and, once more reading the letter, he ſaid, " Yes, enterprize ſhall be mine!—I am reſolved what to do—the Eaſt—the Eaſt—there lies the land of wealth, there will this three hundred pounds ſoon be increaſed three hundred fold; then will I return, claim my Amelia, and be bleſſed for ever."

The pleaſure which at firſt had glowed in the boſom of the fond father, at the amelioration he beheld in his ſon's proſpect, from the unexpected bounty thus beſtowed on him, was cruelly damped when he heard the venture to wh ch he deſtined it. He knew well, from the general impetuoſity of his temper, that the idea haſtily adopted, would be as haſtily executed; and he dreaded a diſpoſition like his, being launched, without a friend to guide it, on the wide and intoxicating ocean of Eaſtern luxury. But though he had ſmall hopes of deterring him from his purpoſe, he was determined not to let it paſs entirely unnoticed,

noticed, and without a word of exhortation to conſider well what he was about; and he ſaid, "Do not be too haſty, my dear Charles, in forming your plans, your mind is yet harraſſed and unſettled, give yourſelf time to grow more compoſed, and to reflect on all the difficulties to be encountered in the ſcheme you propoſe, and whether ſome one more eligible might not be adopted; let me conjure you not to take any raſh ſteps."

Charles rather *ſeemed* to liſten, than *really* liſtened, to his father's exhortation; for he had fallen into a deep muſing, of which Amelia was the principal object. The interview with her in the church had ſunk deeply into his mind, and added not a little to his other diſtreſſes, as a ſort of interchange of vows had paſſed, which honour ſeemed alike to forbid either his keeping or breaking. He could not bear the idea of her ſharing his poverty, yet her heart ſeemed ſo devoted to him, that to break off his connection with her, though it ſhould be done from the pureſt motives, would be the height of barbarity; thus he had gone on, day after day, wiſhing to write

ſome kind of apology for what had paſſed, yet not knowing what to ſay. But this change in his proſpects ſeemed to furniſh him with ſo much new matter for a letter, ſo many new ideas to impart to her, that he immediately fell to arranging them in his mind, and forming the plan of his addreſs. But half attending therefore to his father, he anſwered, "Oh do not be uneaſy, my dear Sir, be ſure I will be cool, and talk the matter over deliberately with you, as ſoon as I have written to Amelia, but that muſt be my firſt object," and he haſtened to his room for that purpoſe.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER VII.

Of all the Virtues, JUSTICE is the best,
Valour, without it, is a common pest.
Pyrates and thieves too oft with courage grac'd,
Shew us how ill that virtue may be plac'd;
'Tis our complexion makes us chaste or brave,
JUSTICE from Reason and from Heaven we have;
All other virtues dwell but in the blood,
That in the soul, and gives the name of good.

WALLER.

BUT before we proceed farther with Charles, let us review what had paſſed in the mean time at Sherborne. On the morning after the funeral, when the company were aſſembled at breakfaſt, which Amelia deſired to be excuſed from attending, Mr. Dawkins began, addreſſing himſelf to Frederick:

"So, Sir, Mr. Charles Meadows, at laſt, was preſent at your poor father's funeral."

"How!—what do you mean, Dawkins?"

"He mixed in the croud that attended, and ſtayed behind in the church till he got ſhut in; ſo my ſervant, at leaſt, told me. What was his motive for chooſing that eccentric way of paying his duty to his benefactor, it is impoſſible to ſay, but very ill-natured conſtructions are put upon it; ſome ſay that he was not quite ſober; and others, that he was too proud to join in the proceſſion, where he could only have appeared as the humble dependent of the deceaſed. For my part, however, I believe that theſe are both calumnies, and the truth is, that he had always ſomething of the romantic in his diſpoſition, which was more gratified with the kind of attendance he gave, than if he had gone in the way that other people did."

"Ay, very likely," anſwered Blandford; "perhaps, too, for many reaſons, he might wiſh not to be ſeen by us. But I find that he is very ill; his father left a meſſage to that effect with one of the ſervants, as an apology for going away without ſeeing me; indeed, I do not wonder that he is ſo, for he always had

had a knack of working up his feelings to a higher pitch than reaſon could juſtify."

Mrs. St. Aubyn looked vexed and hurt at this converſation; and remarked, that ſhe thought Mr. Charles Meadows very much to be pitied, conſidering the ſituation in which he was left; and that the more acutely he ſeemed to regret the loſs of Mr. Blandford, the ſtronger proof he gave of the goodneſs of his heart: if his conduct, therefore, had been a little romantic, it was rather deſerving of commendation than cenſure.

"Oh, certainly," ſaid Dawkins, "nor had I the leaſt intention of mentioning the circumſtance as a matter deſerving of cenſure; I am ſure that no one can pity him more ſincerely than I do, his ſituation muſt be particularly mortifying to a perſon of his high and independent ſpirit."

"No doubt of it," ſaid Blandford. He would have proceeded, but the entrance of a ſervant with a meſſage broke into the converſation, nor was it reſumed again.

What had paſſed, however, made an impreſſion on the mind of Mrs. St. Aubyn, not

very much to the advantage either of her nephew or of his tutor; nor could ſhe ſufficiently lament ſo ſtriking a diſſimilarity between the manners and diſpoſition of the former, and thoſe of her deceaſed brother. But Miſs Blandford, young and unſuſpicious, thoroughly benevolent herſelf, and diſpoſed to believe all the world equally ſo, never diſcerned the unfavourable ſentiments which they thus betrayed towards Charles; nor was deterred from entering with Frederick on a ſubject which ſhe had very much at heart, viz. to make ſuch a proviſion for him, as ſhould remedy the unfortunate circumſtances which had rendered her Father's kind intentions of no effect.

As ſoon, therefore, as breakfaſt was over, ſhe took Blandford aſide, and told him that ſhe wiſhed for ſome converſation with him in private; on which he retired with her into another room, when ſhe began:

"My dear Frederick, ſince by my father's dying without a will, we are become his ſole heirs, I have no doubt that you will unite with me in carrying into execution his kind

intentions

intentions with regard to poor Charles Meadows, which his ſad untimely end prevented his accompliſhing himſelf. I am ſure that I ſhall moſt gladly give up as much of my ſhare of the property as may be requiſite for that purpoſe."

Frederick liſtened attentively to her, but not with a countenance expreſſive of the moſt cordial concurrence in her ſentiments; he heſitated, bit his nails, twirled his fingers, and ſeemed once or twice on the point of ſpeaking, but not to know how to begin. Juliana, ſurprized, ſaid, after a ſilence of ſome minutes, "You aſtoniſh me, brother, you do not anſwer; ſurely you cannot heſitate on my propoſal; I expected nothing from you but the readieſt and warmeſt aſſent to it."

"Why,—ſiſter,—a—Miſs Blandford—why, really,—a—I have not yet thought about the matter you mention. You know, that I am but juſt returned home,—I have been occupied about our poor father's funeral,—and have a great deal of buſineſs on my hands;—beſides, I really do not know what my father's intentions might be."

"Neither

"Neither do I know them exactly; but I know very well, that he deſigned to make him a preſent of a thouſand pounds, and to give him the living of Galſtone on the death of Mr. Rigby, who, you know, is upwards of ninety years of age: I believe too, he intended to have ſettled an annuity on him till the living ſhould become vacant, but to what amount I cannot tell."

"Indeed!—my father's intentions then, methinks, were extremely liberal."

"Oh, yes, they were, indeed; but, you know, he always was one of the moſt generous of men. Suppoſe then we give him the thouſand pounds now, and make him an allowance of two hundred pounds a year till the living ſhall be vacant, when I have no doubt that you will preſent him to it."

"Why—why, I really cannot ſay any thing to that, ſiſter; you know, we are neither of us yet of age, and we cannot therefore alienate ſo much of our property; and as to the living, why, you know, different people have different views and attachments. Charles Meadows has had a great deal done for

for him by our family, much more than he could reaſonably expect, as he was not in any way connected with it; and there is Dawkins quite unprovided for, and I am ſure his kindneſs to me has created him a very ſtrong claim on my gratitude."

"I am ſure, brother, I have not the leaſt wiſh to check you in ſhewing that gratitude in whatever way you may think proper; a tutor who has done his duty by his pupil cannot be too highly rewarded, but I muſt think that Charles has a prior claim on us, eſpecially as in making the proviſion I propoſe for him, we are following the known wiſhes of one of the beſt of fathers, to whoſe memory it is incumbent on us to pay every poſſible mark of reſpect."

"Oh, certainly, ſiſter; I am ſure nobody can wiſh more ardently than I do to ſhew how much I reſpect his memory, he certainly was a moſt excellent man; but the beſt of characters have their weak ſides, and ſurely his laviſh fondneſs for a young man with whom he was totally unconnected, was the weak part of his."

"You

"You aſtoniſh me beyond meaſure, Frederick; --- can pure benevolence then be a weakneſs in any one?"

"Certainly, if it operate to the injury of a man's own children, who ſhould be the firſt objects of his affection."

"If it ſhould operate to their injury, it then ceaſes to be pure benevolence. But however, brother, I cannot allow that this remark of yours applies at all to the preſent caſe; my father's property was ſo large that he could well ſpare ſufficient for the education and ſettlement of this young man, without the ſmalleſt injury to us."

"Yes; but if he choſe to laviſh away his property in this manner, I do not know that it is at all incumbent on us to follow his example."

"Frederick, you aſtoniſh me beyond expreſſion! I did not expect, from you, a moment's heſitation about performing an act of juſtice; for as ſuch, and ſuch only, can I conſider what I wiſh to be done. Our father took Charles out of the ſituation in which, alone, Mr. Meadows's circumſtances would have

have permitted *him* to place him, and gave him a genteel and rather expenſive education, with a promiſe of making a ſuitable proviſion for him; and if this proviſion is not made, ſuch an education muſt prove a curſe inſtead of a bleſſing. What has been done for him, therefore, inſtead of releaſing us from any farther claim on his part, is the very circumſtance which creates the claim upon us. But, I have done---if you cannot feel this obligation, I am ſorry for you; ſorry, indeed, that I have been ſo miſtaken in my brother! The living, certainly, muſt reſt with you; but the thouſand pounds, with ſome addition to it, I am determined he ſhall have."

"But remember, ſiſter, that you are yet only in your eighteenth year, and, fortunately, the law will not allow you to fool away your money in this way till you are twenty-one, by which time, it is to be hoped, you will be grown wiſer."

Poor Juliana, hurt to the laſt degree at her brother's manner, and at the little regard he ſhewed to what appeared to her an act of ſtrict juſtice, could contain herſelf no longer, but

but burſt into tears; on which Frederick ſaid, with a ſneer, "Nay, then I ſee plainly that Dawkins was perfectly right when he foretold what would be the conſequence of my father's foſtering this choice plant; that he and my ſiſter would form a fine romantic attachment to each other, and that I ſhould have the honour of calling the Welch parſon's ſon my brother. But, however, now I am aware of this, I hope I ſhall be able to prevent your throwing yourſelf away in ſuch a manner."

Juliana was more and more ſhocked and ſurpriſed, and, at firſt, too much overpowered to reply; but, after a little while, rallying her ſpirits, ſhe anſwered: "And if I were to marry Charles Meadows, I ſhould never conſider it as an act of degradation, either to myſelf or my family. He may have his failings, but he has a noble heart, and one of the fineſt of tempers, with talents that may conduct him to the moſt reſpectable ſituations. However, on that account I do aſſure you, brother, you may make yourſelf perfectly eaſy, for I believe no thoughts of our forming a matrimonial connection ever entered either

his

his head or mine. As a friend, I feel a moſt ſincere regard for him, and a deep intereſt in his welfare; as a fellow-creature, I wiſh to ſee juſtice done him, --- and you are in full poſſeſſion of my ideas of juſtice."

"Which entirely vary from my own; and I cannot enough rejoice, that the law has wiſely provided that *your* juſtice ſhall not be adminiſtered." And ſo ſaying, he roſe up, and abruptly left the room.

Never was mortification greater than what Miſs Blandford now experienced. She had pictured to her delighted imagination, the brother who had been the companion of her infant years, the ſharer in all her juvenile amuſements, the confidante and promoter of her youthful frolicks, now, in his maturer years, returning to be the choſen and cheriſhed friend of her ſoul; and pleaſed herſelf with the proſpect of their hearts ſtill beating in uniſon to each other, and being actuated by the ſame principles of honour, generoſity, and morality: But ah! how was ſhe miſtaken! She found this brother cold-hearted, abſorbed in ſelfiſhneſs, and even inſenſible to the com-

mon

mon principles of juſtice---ſhe ſaw, and wept at her diſappointment.

At this moment Mrs. St. Aubyn entered, who ſeeing her niece in tears, and knowing that Frederick had but juſt left the room, gueſſed immediately the tendency of the converſation they had held, and that her nephew had been diſplaying farther tokens of the ſame temper which the breakfaſt ſcene had exhibited. She tenderly enquired of Juliana, the cauſe of her uneaſineſs; to which the latter replied, by relating all that had paſſed with her brother, lamenting in ſtrong and pathetic terms, that he was no longer the ſame whom ſhe had ſo much loved, concluding with repeating her determination, that ſome proviſion ſhould be made for Charles, out of her fortune, as ſoon as ſhe ſhould have it in her power.

Mrs. St. Aubyn applauded her reſolution, and joined in regretting her diſappointment with regard to Frederick. She then proceeded to ſay, that as Juliana had now a home to ſeek, and no comfortable proſpect appeared for her in continuing with her brother, ſhe

was

was come to offer her an aſylum at her houſe; an offer which her niece accepted with the utmoſt pleaſure and gratitude, and London was fixed on as the place of their future abode.

When Frederick was informed of this arrangement, he coldly obſerved: that it was all very well; that no perſon was ſo proper to have the care of his ſiſter as her aunt; and that he thought London far the beſt place for women to reſide at. Not the leaſt hint dropped from him, of a wiſh that they ſhould live with him, or even of a hope that they would, at any time, viſit him at Sherborne; on the contrary, his manner rather betrayed an impatience to get rid of them. An early day was appointed for their departure, when they agreed to viſit Amelia's father, with whom ſhe had never failed to ſpend two or three months every year, and thence to proceed to London; we ſhall, therefore, take our leave of them for a ſhort time, and then preſent them to our Readers, ſettled at a houſe in Berkeley Square.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER VIII.

Dear lovely bow'rs of innocence and eaſe,
Seats of my youth, when ev'ry sport could please;
How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endear'd each scene!
How often have I paus'd on ev'ry charm,
The ſhelter'd cote, the cultivated farm;
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topp'd the neighb'ring hill;
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath it's shade,
For talking age and whisp'ring lovers made!

GOLDSMITH.

To AMELIA St. AUBYN.

HOW often has my heart reproached me, my deareſt Amelia, ſince our laſt diſtreſſing interview, both with what paſſed on that occaſion, and that I have delayed ſo long to make my proper apology for it. That apology

apology is only to be found in the ſtate of diſ-traction into which circumſtances had at that time hurried me; and believe me, Amelia, much-adored Amelia, that nothing but being ſo little maſter of myſelf, could have wrung from me any hint of a paſſion which I ſo ſtrongly felt, or any thing like a ſolicitation to have it returned.

I know that you have not been, that you could not be, inſenſible to that paſſion; that you muſt be well aware it is not of a recent date, but, commenced in childhood, has been uniformly increaſing; yet I have forborne to ſpeak of it, till my fair proſpects of being happily ſettled in life ſhould be realized, when, with my heart, I could offer you a ſituation in the world not unworthy even of merit ſuch as yours. Nor, deareſt Amelia, was that ſi-lence painful to me, while I could ſee and converſe with you ſo frequently; could flatter myſelf that my paſſion was not wholly unre-turned, and that I might one day be able to talk of it without fear or heſitation. But when theſe fair proſpects were over-clouded, I felt that honour commanded me never to break

break the ſilence which I had ſo long preſerved, and I reſolved to comply with her dictates.

Oh, Amelia, this was a reſolution eaſy to be *formed*, but hard, alas, to be *kept!* and who could anſwer for himſelf in ſuch a moment as that in which it was broken! It was not a moment for reflection, it was one of feeling alone, nor were the emotions of my heart to be controlled: Yet remorſe for what then paſſed has ever ſince purſued me; and while conſcious that I ought to make excuſes for my conduct, my trembling hand has been unable to write all which that remorſe would have dictated.

But a ſudden change of circumſtances has inſpired me with freſh life, freſh hopes; and I ſhould feel myſelf guilty indeed, were I to delay writing to you another moment, and at the ſame time that I requeſt your forgiveneſs for the paſt, lay open to you, explicitly, my preſent ſituation and future proſpects. Child of the bounty of others from my infancy, I remain ſo ſtill;--- three hundred pounds have been ſent me by an unknown hand: yet I

cannot

cannot be at a loſs to conjecture whence alone ſuch generoſity could proceed; deeds ſuch as this are not the produce of every ſoil, nor can I doubt that this is the growth of Sherborne Houſe --- Miſs Blandford, perhaps, or Mrs. St. Aubyn. Be it ſo; from them I ſcruple not to accept what diſintereſted friendſhip alone could prompt them to beſtow; nor will it ever be painful to me to reflect, that to either of them I owe the origin of my future fortunes.

Before this event, a thouſand plans had been floating in my mind, for eſtabliſhing myſelf in ſome way by which to gain my livelihood; but I could not fix upon any: all muſt have kept me as a burthen on my father for a long time, the thought of which was inſupportable to me. That obſtacle is now removed, and I have reſolved, my Amelia, to adventure with the fortune thus thrown in my way, in that land of wealth, the Eaſt Indies; there I may hope to acquire a fortune worthy of you, ſooner than in this country, whatever might be my employment. Let the idea be deemed wild by thoſe cold hearts who cannot feel the

the mighty power of ſuch motives as ſtimulate me to action: But he who does not love with enthuſiaſm, or who would not defy danger and difficulty to poſſeſs her, could never be worthy of Amelia St. Aubyn!

Welcome, then, ſeat of my hopes; ſhores where I ſhall find the abundant harveſt of wealth, which this ſterile ſoil denies to the young adventurer! And when my now ſlender means ſhall be multiplied into thouſands; when the treaſures of the land ſhall be pouring in upon me from all quarters, then will I return again to my native ſoil, throw myſelf at the feet of my angel, and if I ſhall be ſo fortunate as to find her ſtill diſengaged, ſtill attached to the lover of her youth, ſolicit her hand, and be bleſſed for ever!

But whither is my fancy wandering? — the ſcenes which open to my view, the idea that I may one day, and that at no very diſtant period, be in a ſituation which ſhall render me worthy to be the Huſband of Amelia, tranſport me beyond myſelf! Let me then break off, ere I expoſe myſelf farther; let me bid you, for a time, farewel, my love.—

I do

I do not desire you *not* to be anxious about me, for there is a tender anxiety, not painful to yourself, which I would above all things wish you to feel; yet I ask you not to consider yourself as any way bound to me.—No, I would leave you free as air, I would seek for no other tie but the attachment which has hitherto united us; no other chain but what our own hearts may impose. I shall be in London in two months, when the India ships will be about sailing; I understand from report that you, with our Juliana and Mrs. St. Aubyn, are soon going into Leicestershire; I shall probably therefore see you no more, my Amelia, till I have a fortune to lay at your feet, such as your nearest friends cannot think unworthy of you. Till that happy moment, adieu!

But believe me,

Your unalterably devoted

CHARLES-BLANDFORD MEADOWS.

Such was the letter written by Charles to his Amelia. It was anſwered by her in general terms, expreſſive of ſtrong attachment, of great pleaſure at hearing of the amelioration in his proſpects, and ſatisfaction in the ſcheme he had formed, only lamenting that it would occaſion them ſo long a ſeparation. She told him alſo, that, after ſpending about two months in Leiceſterſhire, her aunt would remove to London, and, ſhould ſhe be arrived there before his departure, he would always be a welcome gueſt at her houſe.

Amelia's ſanction of his intentions fixed Charles more fully in his determination to purſue them with all poſſible alacrity, and he ſet about his preparations accordingly. But Mr. Meadows could not ſubſcribe to Amelia's ſentiments; he, on the contrary, ſaw this plan irrevocably fixed, with the deepeſt regret, and the moſt fearful apprehenſions for ſuch a diſpoſition as his ſon's, launched on the perilous ocean of Eaſtern luxury and voluptuouſneſs; all which he repreſented to him in the ſtrongeſt points of view which his ſimple artleſs eloquence could dictate.

Charles

Charles could not liſten with indifference to any thing which came from a quarter he ſo much reſpected, and heartily wiſhed that his father's full approbation of his ſcheme had been united to that of his miſtreſs. But engroſſed as he was by the deſire of accumulating fortune ſufficient to ſmooth his way to the union which was become the great object of his life, and fully poſſeſſed with the conviction that he was purſuing the moſt efficacious meaſures to accompliſh his purpoſe, his reſolution could not have been ſhaken by the united powers of all the greateſt orators of the age. Indeed, he had now ſo aſſociated in his mind the idea of Amelia with that of India, that it was impoſſible to diſſever them, and he would have conſidered the relinquiſhment of one as the renunciation of the other, therefore as a matter not to be brought into queſtion.

All things being at length ſettled, and the time arrived when it was neceſſary that he ſhould repair to London, he took an affecting leave of his family, amid tears, prayers, and endleſs wiſhes for his happineſs and proſperity, on their ſide; and the kindeſt aſſurances

of liberality on his, when he ſhould be maſter of the wealth which floated in viſion before his eyes.

The vehicle in which he was to be conveyed to London, was to take him up by a very early hour in the morning, at an inn about three miles from Milſingtown, whither he purpoſed walking. On account of the time when he was to depart, he had bade adieu to his family over night, but was too much occupied with reflecting on his ſeparation for ſo long, ſo indefinite a period, from perſons ſo juſtly dear, to be able to ſleep. He lay therefore revolving in his mind the events of his paſt life, the happineſs he had experienced till the late ſad reverſe of fortune, and the uncertainty of his future fate. In ſuch a review, he could not fail to advert once more to the worth and affection of his deceaſed patron, to the exquiſite days he had paſſed under his roof, and to a thouſand incidents the occaſion of the ſweeteſt hopes, or the moſt anxious alarms, with regard to his Amelia; till, at length, he had wrought himſelf into ſuch a fit of romantic enthuſiaſm, that he reſolved to

riſe

riſe that inſtant, and ſince, at ſuch an hour, he ran no riſque of being ſeen by the inhabitants of Sherborne Manſion, now reduced to Frederick and his tutor, to indulge himſelf with taking a laſt farewel of that dear place, when he could trace over many a well-known ſcene, and recall many a cheriſhed remembrance, concluding the whole with an adieu to his old friend the ſteward.

He ſat out accordingly.—It was one of the moſt delicious mornings that ever dawned upon our hemiſphere; the ſun juſt riſen above the horizon, "*painted with gold the village ſpire,*" and, gliſtening on the dewy face of nature, ſtudded the trees, the flowers, and the herbage, with thouſands, and ten thouſands, of ſparkling gems. The ſkylark, the thruſh, and the blackbird welcomed his glad return to earth with their harmonious ſtrains, while the flocks and the herds ſpringing from their turfy beds, joined their voices to fill the ſolemn chorus of nature. It was even ſuch a morning as the immortal Milton deſcribes to have ariſen in Paradiſe, when the ſole inha-

bitants of earth ſang to their great Creator the ſublime hymn of praiſe and adoration:

"Theſe are thy glorious works, &c."

What could be better calculated than ſuch a moment to feed the romantic turn of our hero's mind?—It was ſoothed into ſo ſweet a ſadneſs, as rendered every object doubly intereſting. He ſtopped at the church, and wept as he looked in at the window toward the grave of his benefactor, while in his heart he ſolemnly renewed the vows he had made to Amelia, as he ſurveyed the ſpot of their laſt melancholy interview. Thence he repaired to other ſcenes of tranſport and of ſorrow; here kiſſed the turf on which the feet of his beloved had trod; there the arm of the bench on which her whiter arm had reſted; till at length he came to the ſide of a large lake, where, when he firſt went to ſchool, Frederick, Juliana, Amelia, and himſelf, had each planted a cutting of weeping-willow, as a general pledge of friendſhip;—an infant idea originating in Charles, which highly delighted his patron, and ſtill more, if poſſible, old Horton. The trees

trees had flouriſhed exceedingly, they were always called by the names of their reſpective planters, and even the mild Mr. Blandford would have gone near to curſe the ſacrilegious hand which could have dared attempt their removal.

Charles intended to have gathered a wreath from Juliana's, Amelia's, and his own, and twined them together to preſerve as a ſacred relick; but, when he arrived at the ſpot, the trees were gone, while the venerable Horton ſat on a mound of earth which had been raiſed in digging them up, diſconſolate as Hannibal amid the ruins of Carthage. When he caſt his eyes on his beloved Charles, he ſprang up, and approaching him graſped his hand ardently, and pointed to the ſpot, unable at the firſt moment to ſpeak. Charles underſtood him; "And this is done by Mr. Blandford's order?" he ſaid.

"Alas! yes," anſwered the ſteward, with a deep ſigh.

"And what could be his motive?"

Horton ſhook his head.—"I am afraid," ſaid Charles, "it was an effuſion of ill-hu-

mour, a wiſh to eraſe every remembrance of his excellent father's attachments.—Oh, God! that a ſon can be ſo unlike ——." He was overpowered, he could ſay no more.

"Unlike, indeed!" ſaid Horton, after a pauſe, "I ſcarcely now know Sherborne, or any thing belonging to it. Oh that I ſhould have lived to ſee this day!—that I had but been buried in the ſame grave with his dear dear father!"

"Ah, Horton, two ſuch men as he live not in the ſame century!"

"But ſuch a difference we hardly could expect." Horton had now recovered his powers of utterance, and he went on:—"Such ſtrange humours, he likes nothing;—he ſaid theſe trees were old and ugly; that the planting them was a ſilly childiſh buſineſs, which he wondered his father could encourage.—He's ſo ſnappiſh too, if ever I ſay a word more than yes or no, when he aſks me a queſtion; and its all, "Hold your nonſenſe, I only wanted an anſwer, not your ſtupid opinion about the matter." So different from my late dear maſter, God reſt his ſoul! for

you

you know, Mr. Charles, how he would ſtand and talk to me for half an hour together, and I partly thought it was becauſe he was ſo free, that you was always ſo kind; for example, as the ſaying is, prevails more oft than precept. Lord, why there never was a tree planted, nor a field mowed, nor the leaſt thing poſſible done, never ſince my late dear maſter came to the eſtate, but what he aſked my advice: Horton, do you think ſo and ſo would be an improvement? and dont you think that hedge would be better removed, it would open the proſpect? and dont you think that plantation wants thinning? and all ſo kind and ſo friendly. But now it is, Horton, cut down thoſe curſed ugly old trees, and in ſuch a ſhort kind of a way; I am ſure when he ſaid ſo about theſe four trees, I was fit to break my heart. I would fain have kept them all, and planted them in my garden, but it is not big enough, ſo I could only keep my greateſt favourite, Charles; it is planted by the ſide of the fiſh-pond.—Do, my dear young man, come with me and ſee it."

Charles would gladly have accepted his invitation, but his time was limited, and he had no more to loſe; he therefore embraced the old man with tears of gratitude for the affection he ſhewed him, regretting, at the ſame time, his impotence to teſtify it by means more ſolid. Here then they ſeparated, and Charles proceeded onwards, furniſhed with much new matter for reflection during his journey.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER IX.

Je l'avourai, mon cœur ne veut rien qu'ardamment,
Je me croirois haï d'être aimé foiblement;
De tous mes sentimens tel eſt le caractére
Je veux avec excès vous aimer eſt vous plaire.

VOLTAIRE.

CHARLES, on his arrival in London, engaged a paſſage on board the Ponſborne Eaſt Indiaman, and made all other neceſſary arrangements for his voyage, which were ſoon completed, and the fleet only waited a fair wind for ſailing. From the moment of his own arrival, he had anxiouſly looked for that of Mrs. St. Aubyn and her nieces, that once again, ere his departure, he might behold the object of his adoration, and renew in perſon his tender adieu.

Nor did this wiſh remain ungratified: the

wind, more favourable to the ardours of the lover than the anxieties of the merchant, ſtill detained the fleet in harbour; and long before its releaſe, thoſe three ladies were become inhabitants of the metropolis. No ſooner was this event known to Charles, than he flew on the wings of impatience to Berkeley-Square, where he was received with even increaſed kindneſs and affection by the aunt and Juliana, and certainly not with diminiſhed, by Amelia. At their firſt interview, however, their behaviour towards each other was much the ſame as it had always been at Sherborne; nor were the tender ſentiments they reciprocally entertained, communicated by any other language than what had ſo often ſerved as a medium for conveying them, — the expreſſive language of the eyes.

As Charles had not at that time any occupation, but was at full liberty to purſue the bent of his inclinations, he ſpent the greateſt part of his time at the houſe, whither they always led him, till at length, by frequent meetings, he ſo far forgot his reſolution of not talking of his paſſion to Amelia, that, whenever

whenever he had an opportunity, he talked of nothing elſe.

Nor did he urge his ſuit in the dull cold language of thoſe who love by rule, and ſeek to pleaſe by a few common place attentions; he was not of a diſpoſition to feel a lukewarm attachment himſelf, nor to be ſatisfied with ſuch an one in his beloved; but while he poured out his ſoul in tranſports of the moſt extravagant affection, a leſs degree of love on her part would have ſtruck like a dagger in his breaſt. Yet this was not a mortification in reſerve for him, for how ſilent ſoever might be the manner in which Amelia liſtened to his raptures, it was ſufficiently expreſſive how pleaſing they were, and how much his ſentiments correſponded with her own. Thus, by degrees, they became hardly eaſy aſunder; and frequent as was their intercourſe, ſtill each meeting grew more and more intereſting, and increaſed their dread of ſeparation, the arrival of which fatal moment, however, was every day to be apprehended. Under ſuch circumſtances, it is not ſurpriſing that their attachment was wrought up to a height which could

not

not be exceeded, and has not often been equalled.

The dreaded moment, though long delayed, at length arrived; the wind, after ſo long continuing adverſe, ſuddenly ſhifted its quarter, and the paſſengers were ſummoned on board with all poſſible expedition. When the meſſenger who was ſent for Charles, arrived at his lodgings, he was not at home, but the miſtreſs of the houſe directed him to Mrs. St. Aubyn's, where, ſhe told him, he was moſt likely to be found; but neither was he there: he had walked out with the young ladies immediately after breakfaſt, and they were not yet returned. As the meſſenger was quitting the houſe, the young ladies appeared, but no Charles with them; he was, they ſaid, gone back to his lodgings, where, on being ſought a ſecond time, he was found.

No time was to be loſt, he muſt go directly, he muſt not even ſnatch a haſty moment to bid his Amelia farewel, and he departed immediately with the meſſenger. He wrote her a letter, however, as ſoon as he got on board, full of the deepeſt regret, that the ſud-

den

den manner of his being ſummoned away prevented his ſeeing her again, together with the moſt reiterated and ſolemn aſſurances of his love and fidelity.

Though Amelia, when ſhe met the meſſenger, could only gueſs at the cauſe of his eager enquiries after Charles, yet ſhe had ſuch ſufficient reaſon on which to ground her ſurmiſes that ſhe was to ſee him no more, (for they had noticed the change of the wind when they went out together) that an univerſal tremor ſeized her, and Juliana could with difficulty ſupport her up ſtairs. Here ſhe learned the confirmation of her doom from her aunt; but long as ſhe had expected the event, ſhe did not find herſelf by that means at all the better prepared for it, and ſhe ſunk almoſt ſenſeleſs into a chair. What would ſhe not have given, at that moment, for only half an hour's converſation, juſt to pour out all the ſoft effuſions of her heart? She recollected that ſhe had a thouſand

Most pretty things to ſay;—ſhe could have told him
How she would think on him at certain hours,

Such

Such thoughts, and such; — or would have made him
swear,
The ſhe's of India never should betray
Her interest or his honour.

SHAKSPEARE.

But he was gone, and for worlds ſhe could not now communicate one thought.

She was abſorbed in theſe tender yet melancholy reflections, her aunt and Juliana kindly endeavouring to ſoothe and conſole her, when the door of the room was ſuddenly burſt open, and ſhe beheld her father enter, with a countenance which beſpake a ſoul torn with a whirlwind of paſſion. He was at firſt, from exceſs of agitation, unable to utter a ſyllable; and his features, rendered terrible by the phrenzy of his mind, had ſuch an effect on the affrighted Amelia, that ſhe ſunk ſenſeleſs into Mrs. St. Aubyn's arms.

The ſituation in which the father now beheld his child, ſoftened his anger in a moment, and he joined aſſiduouſly in the efforts uſed to reſtore her, which, after ſome little time, was effected. Mrs. St. Aubyn then entreated her brother to retire for awhile, and leave

leave poor Amelia time to recover. To this he conſented rather reluctantly, and only on condition that his ſiſter ſhould accompany him into another room, and leave her niece to the care of Miſs Blandford.

When they were retired, he burſt forth into a torrent of the moſt bitter invective againſt Mrs. St. Aubyn, for permitting the intimacy which, he ſaid, he had been credibly informed, had exiſted ever ſince their coming to London, between his daughter and a ſtarving profligate, who had no home where to hide his head, nor any means of ſubſiſtence but by abuſing the confidence of credulous tradeſmen who might be weak enough to truſt him. He concluded by proteſting that Amelia ſhould not continue under her care another day, but, for the future, ſhould be entirely under his own eye, and regretted and reproached himſelf that he had ever truſted ſo important a charge in other hands.

Mrs. St. Aubyn heard him with aſtoniſhment, and was totally unable to comprehend the meaning of the harſh expreſſions which he had uſed both to herſelf and Charles. She calmly

calmly replied, "You, certainly, Sir, have a right to diſpoſe of your daughter as you pleaſe, till the law allows her to diſpoſe of herſelf; nor ſhall I attempt to oppoſe any thing but argument to the reſolution which you have now declared. As to myſelf, I am utterly unconſcious of having acted towards my niece, whom I have always loved as a child, otherwiſe than in the ſtricteſt conformity with the affection and duty of a mother; and as to young Meadows, whom I ſuppoſe to be the object of your alluſions, you know very well, that by not oppoſing, you gave, at leaſt, a tacit ſanction to his attachment to your daughter. What you mean now, by calling him a *profligate*, I am at a loſs to conjecture: had there been any reaſon to ſuppoſe him ſuch, he had never gained admiſſion into my houſe; poor he certainly is, but that is no reproach where, as in his caſe, it proceeds from misfortune alone; nor were you a ſtranger to that circumſtance when we were laſt with you, yet you appeared not then to conſider it as an objection to him. But after all, brother, this alarm on your part, is the moſt ill timed poſ-

ſible,

ſible, for however poor or profligate, either is now of little conſequence to my niece, from whom he is, perhaps, ſeparated for ever, as he is at this moment embarked for the Eaſt Indies."

Mr. St. Aubyn had liſtened with no ſmall impatience to the former part of this addreſs, but the latter made him ſome amends; the idea that Charles was no longer in the kingdom, was ſo welcome, that it in a moment diſperſed the dark clouds which had lowered on his countenance, and he apologized for being ſo haſty, but excuſed it on the ſcore of paternal affection and anxiety, and promiſed that he would not again think of his daughter's removal: He would, however, talk to her on the ſubject of her attachment, which, whatever might be the future ſituation of Mr. Meadows, never would receive his ſanction, as he had proofs of his unworthineſs far too ſtrong to be diſbelieved.—What theſe proofs were, will in due time be explained.

As ſoon, therefore, as Amelia was tolerably recovered, ſhe was ſummoned before him; when he told her, that however he might have

once

once ſeen without regret, nay, even with ſome degree of ſatisfaction, her partiality for young Meadows, he muſt now abſolutely forbid her entertaining any farther idea of an union with him. "It is not," ſaid he, "the alteration that has taken place in his expectations with regard to fortune, which has occaſioned this change in the favourable ſentiments I formerly entertained of his character, and the ſanction I gave to his views, by not oppoſing them. No, Amelia, believe me I am not actuated by ſuch diſhonourable motives, for however I might have wiſhed to ſee you ſettled in a more affluent ſituation, yet, on that account only, I had never ſaid one word againſt ſuch an alliance. But I know from the very beſt authority that he is a rake and a debauchee, who muſt make his wife one of the moſt miſerable of women. It is this conviction, and this alone, which induces me to require of you, my deareſt child, a promiſe that you will henceforward give up all thoughts of indulging ſuch an ill-placed paſſion, nor from this moment hold any intercourſe direct, or indirect, with its object."

Amelia

Amelia liſtened to her father with the moſt profound ſilence and attention, and by the time he ceaſed ſpeaking, her heart was too full to make any reply. They remained for a few minutes with their eyes fixed on each other, when, at length, Mr. St. Aubyn began again. "What am I to think of this obſtinate ſilence, has the voice of a father then ſo little power over you? Do you think that becauſe you have not lived with me, all ties are ſo far broken between us, that my judgment, my entreaties, are not to have any weight with you? No, Amelia, in conſenting to your living with your aunt, I never meant to give up the rights of a father; I always expected to be, and always have been, conſulted by her on all matters of importance, wherein you were concerned; and in this, moſt important, I expect a negative voice at leaſt. Will you not ſpeak, Amelia?—do you ſuppoſe that, in urging this matter ſo forcibly, I have any object at heart but your happineſs?—have I ever in my life oppoſed any thing that could really contribute to it?"

She raiſed her eyes, which had been for ſome

ſome time caſt on the ground, and looking tenderly at him, "I know it well, Sir," ſhe ſaid, "I have ever found you a kind and indulgent parent; but what is it that you would now require of me?—are our thoughts and affections ſo entirely in our own power, that we can command a beloved object from them for ever? Oh! reflect, my father, that in promiſing to forget Mr. Meadows, I bind myſelf to what I have no power to perform."

"Amelia, you know very well, that abſolutely and literally to forget him, cannot be the thing which I require, for ſuch a total loſs of remembrance is not in our power; but with what is in your power, I think I have a right to expect your compliance, and therefore demand a promiſe that you will never become his wife, and exert all the energies of your mind to ſubdue a paſſion, which, if cheriſhed, muſt make you miſerable."

"And wherefore would my father exact ſuch a promiſe?—Do you think, dear Sir, if demonſtrative proof were placed before me, that a connection with Mr. Meadows muſt make me as miſerable as you ſuppoſe, I could

be

be ſo infatuated as to plunge myſelf into manifeſt ruin?—Surely you cannot have ſo poor an opinion of me; and if you cannot convince my reaſon that this would be the caſe, why wiſh to extort engagements which, under ſuch circumſtances, I could not conſider as binding?"

"Not binding!---Are your ideas of morality, then, ſo much relaxed by this unfortunate connection, that you can think a ſolemn engagement once entered into, is ever to be broken through?"

"Judge not ſo harſhly of me, deareſt father!---No one, believe me, can have a higher idea than myſelf of the ſacred duty of fulfilling any engagement to which I have pledged my honour, provided that pledge was *voluntarily* given, not *extorted.* Nay, farther, I even think that there may be inſtances where no actual promiſe has been made, and yet one's honour be as much bound to fulfilling certain implied contracts, as if the moſt ſolemn and ſpecific engagement had been entered into."

"And

"And this doctrine you would apply to your attachment to the profligate in queſtion."

"To Mr. Meadows, Sir, I ſhould certainly think myſelf bound by the ſacred ties of honour, even though he had no ſtronger claim upon me; but you cannot be ignorant that our contract has gone farther."

"To my heart-rending affliction I know it has!—But, to judge you from your own principles, Amelia,—you allow that circumſtances may ariſe, to render the moſt ſolemn engagement nugatory; ſuch is the preſent caſe;—when you engaged yourſelf to this young man, you ſuppoſed him to be a man of honour and integrity; you find him otherwiſe, and the contract is no longer binding."

"*I* find him otherwiſe, my father!—away with ſuch an idea!—the bare ſuppoſition is the groſſeſt injury to Mr. Meadows; I know his heart to be the throne of honour and virtue, nor can he ever ſwerve from their dictates."

"This to me, Amelia!—to me, who am ſo much better acquainted with his character than you can poſſibly be, and know him for a rake,

rake, a profligate, a man devoid of all principle; tell me no more then of his worth and honour, but make me the promiſe I require, or, by heaven, ——"

"Hold, hold, Sir! believe me you are miſtaken!—But, ſhould he ever prove ſo, which heaven avert, I know very well what ſacrifices honour would then require of me; nor would I ever conſent to be the companion of a man who had abandoned all principles of moral rectitude. Let this aſſurance ſuffice you, Sir, nor urge me farther to a promiſe which I muſt and ſhall refuſe to make."

"Oh, woman, woman!" exclaimed Mr. St. Aubyn, half choaked with paſſion, "firm in miſchief, reſolute in ill!—But mark me, mark me, Amelia!—a father's curſes light on thee, if ever thou become the wife of Charles Meadows!"

"For heaven's ſake, ſtop!" ſhe cried, "nor utter execrations, the conſequences of which you cannot foreſee. Oh, let us drop the ſubject!—be aſſured that I will break off all connection with Mr. Meadows, the moment I am convinced that he is unworthy of my

love—more than that you cannot in reaſon and juſtice expect."

"Well, thanks be to heaven, he is, or will ſhortly be, far enough removed from you; and I will hope that abſence may accompliſh what a father's entreaties ſeek in vain!—I muſt reſt on that hope; for the day that ſhould unite my child to a man ſo unworthy, would ſend her wretched father in ſorrow to his grave."

Here this converſation ended. Mr. St. Aubyn ſtayed a few days in London, to aſſure himſelf that Charles had really ſailed for India; and when he was ſatisfied of it, returned again into Leiceſterſhire.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER X.

Pleasure has charms, but so has Virtue too;
One skims the surface like the swallow's wing,
And scuds away unnotic'd. T'other nymph,
Like spotless swans, in solemn majesty
Breasts the full surge, and leaves long light behind.

HORACE WALPOLE.

CHARLES, in the mean time, proceeded on his voyage, full of the moſt flattering hopes of ſucceſs in his undertaking. During his ſtay in London he became acquainted with one of the Eaſt-India Directors, from whom he obtained letters of recommendation to a merchant of great eminence at Calcutta, of the name of Benington, who was in a ſituation to render him the moſt important ſervices. His firſt object, therefore, on landing in India, was to ſeek out

this merchant, to whom he delivered his credentials, and made known the object of his voyage.

Much as Mr. Benington eſteemed the friend who had recommended our hero to his notice, no other motive would have been wanting to intereſt him immediately in his behalf; but, in a very ſhort time, he found a ſtill ſtronger recommendation in the engaging manners of the young man himſelf, which won ſo much upon him, that he ſoon entered into his intereſts with an ardour equal to his own, and ere he had been half a year at Calcutta, took him into partnerſhip in all his mercantile concerns, without the depoſit of a ſingle ſhilling.

Thus was he placed in a ſituation which ſeemed likely to realize all his golden dreams, and he applied himſelf to buſineſs with an aſſiduity which confirmed the merchant's good opinion, and convinced him that he had not been deceived in his choice of a partner, but, by taking ſuch an aſſociate, had no leſs promoted the intereſts of the houſe, than thoſe of the individual.

It is an old and trite obſervation, that the ſame perſon cannot be at once the decided votary of pleaſure, and the patient drudge behind the deſk or counter; the remark may in general be true, but with Charles Meadows it was far otherwiſe. That he had long before imbibed a propenſity to elegant and expenſive diſſipation, is known to the reader, as alſo the means by which it had been checked, nay almoſt eradicated; and it is probable that, if he had continued in the ſame way of life, regularity of conduct, and a prudent œconomy in his expences, might have become ſettled principles and habits, from which not even inclination would have prompted him to depart.

But now, thrown into a ſituation which of all others was moſt calculated to rekindle this propenſity, he felt it revive with ſuch added vigour, that he had no power to reſiſt the torrent which hurried him on, but plunged with the moſt eager impetuoſity into the overwhelming vortex. Yet here, as in the former inſtance, he preſerved untainted all that refinement of manners, that true benevolence,

and generoſity of heart, which had always characterized him; and while he could not help paying a large ſhare of devotion to the airy and meretricious form of PLEASURE, he was ſtill always ready to acknowledge the ſuperior charms of the ſober and majeſtic form of VIRTUE, and made frequent reſolutions that ſhe alone ſhould one day become the goddeſs of his idolatry.

The turn which his young friend had thus taken, did not paſs unobſerved by Mr. Benington; but he had reſided for ſo long a time in India, that he conſidered ſuch a way of life as almoſt a matter of courſe, and it did not therefore inſpire him with the ſame alarms as it might have occaſioned to one unuſed to Eaſtern manners. And after all, perhaps, however great may be the out-cry which is raiſed againſt the diſſipation and profligacy of the Britiſh metropolis in India, if the matter be conſidered with an impartial eye, the lives of nine-tenths of the inhabitants of the Britiſh metropolis at home, are equally profligate, and often more diſguſtingly ſo, than thoſe of their Oriental brethren. Be

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this as it may, as long as Charles did not neglect his buſineſs, the merchant did not think there was much to object to in the portion of pleaſure he intermixed, and he therefore contented himſelf with only now and then throwing in a hint in the way of converſation, that he would never make a fortune, if he ſhould continue to ſpend his money as faſt as he acquired it.

But, when he had been ſomewhat more than a year in India, the buſineſs of the houſe requiring one of the partners to go for ſome time to Allahabad, Mr. Benington thought this a favourable opportunity for checking his career, and he therefore propoſed his undertaking the journey. Nor in ſo doing was he actuated ſolely by a deſire of removing Charles from Calcutta, but alſo by a conviction that he was conſulting the intereſt of the buſineſs, which no one was more capable of tranſacting to the beſt advantage. All he apprehended was, that the young man might find a ſubject of regret in quitting a city with the pleaſures of which he was ſo faſcinated; but he found with ſatisfaction that Charles, far from

regretting this temporary abſence, rejoiced in ſuch an opportunity of gaining farther knowledge of a people and country ſo celebrated even from the remoteſt ages of antiquity, as the Hindoos and Hindoſtan. A farther proof this of his excellent underſtanding, and that however circumſtances might at times miſlead his imagination, he could always recall it from its wanderings, provided a ſufficient ſtimulus was offered to rouſe him into exertion.

The buſineſs not admitting of delay, he embarked immediately on the Hoogly, in the uſual mode of conveyance between places ſituated on the Ganges and her daughter ſtreams, a Budgerow *; and arrived at Allahabad without meeting with any particular occurrence, where he applied himſelf to fulfilling the objects of his miſſion, with a judgment and alacrity which ſufficiently juſtified the expectation formed by his friend.

* For a deſcription of theſe boats, and the mode of going down the Ganges in them, ſee Mrs. Kinderſley's Letters, and Hodges's Travels in India.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER XI.

Oh ye, whose souls relentless love has tam'd
To soft distress, or friends untimely slain,
Court not the luxury of tender thought,
Nor deem it impious to forget those pains
That hurt the living, nought avail the dead!
Go, soft enthusiast! quit the cypress grove,
Nor to the rivulet's lonely moanings tune
Your sad complaint; go, seek the cheerful haunts
Of men, and mingle with the busy crowd;
. . . . . .
. . . . . rush into the field
Where war grows hot, and raging thro' the sky
The lofty trumpet swells the maddening soul;
And in the hardy camp, and toilsome march,
Forget all softer and less manly cares.

ARMSTRONG.

CHARLES had not been long in his new situation before he became acquainted with Lieutenant Rainsford, an officer in the

ſervice of the Company, in whom, from his cultivated mind and elegant manners, ſo congenial to his own, he found a moſt valuable companion; while Rainsford, who had hitherto met with no one in India to whom he could feel himſelf attracted as to a kindred ſoul, enjoyed in Charles's ſociety a pleaſure and intereſt, which convinced him that life had yet ſomething of value in ſtore for him. Accordingly, they were no ſooner known to each other than they became the moſt inſeparable friends, and from that time, ſcarcely any event occurred to the one, that was not immediately communicated to the other.

Such a friend was, indeed, in the circumſtances in which Rainsford was then placed, the moſt valuable acquiſition that could have fallen in his way, as he was almoſt an inſulated being among the maſs of mankind. He was an only child, and loſt both his parents when he was about ſixteen years of age, who left him with a very ſlender fortune. This, by the advice of an uncle, to whoſe guardianſhip he was conſigned, was ſoon after laid out in the purchaſe of a cornetcy of dragoons, for which

which it juſt ſufficed; and ſhortly after this uncle dying alſo, young Rainsford was left without a relation or connection in the world, in which he was any way intereſted, or which was in any way intereſted in him.

When he had been about five years in the army, his regiment being quartered at Exeter, he became acquainted with a gentleman of the name of Byng, who had a pretty houſe and ſmall eſtate juſt out of the city. But Mr. Byng though not rich in the treaſures which are generally eſteemed of greateſt value in the world, poſſeſſed one, which, in the young cornet's eyes, was far more deſirable than all that the mines of Potoſi or Golconda could produce, and this was a daughter about ſeventeen years of age, more lovely than Aurora herſelf, and adorned with every accompliſhment which can add luſtre to beauty while it laſts, and compenſate its loſs when it is no more.

Rainsford's heart was not proof againſt ſuch attractions, but was ſoon taken captive by them, and no ſooner enthralled than its ſituation was made known to its fair tormentor,

who, though not diſpoſed to liberate her priſoner, was by no means averſe to ſurrendering her own heart into captivity in exchange. Aſſured of ſucceſs thus far, the cornet proceeded to impart his tender ſuit to the father of his Anna, with whom it met not with an equally gracious reception; on the contrary, Mr. Byng broke out into vehement expreſſions of indignation, that a man without any other fortune than his commiſſion, ſhould dare to look up to his daughter, and peremptorily forbade him ever to think of coming near his houſe again.

To this the rejected lover might have anſwered, that he could not by any means underſtand in what his preſumption conſiſted; for as Anna Byng, by her father's own confeſſion, could not have any fortune, ſhe had no right, according to the generally received opinions of the world, to expect a huſband with a large one; and if ſhe were the daughter of a gentleman, he was alſo the ſon of one, and, in reſpect to family, therefore, they were on a perfect equality.

Such a reply, however, he did not make;—

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he choſe to purſue a different, and leſs reſpectful, line of conduct, if to reaſon be more reſpectful than to ſhew nothing but ſilent contempt; for turning indignantly away, he immediately quitted the haughty father's preſence, with a look of the moſt ineffable diſdain, and an inward reſolution not to comply with the prohibition he had received.

He therefore ſought every opportunity of ſeeing his Anna privately, and with theſe fortune, (who for a while ſeemed inclined to favour the lovers) furniſhed him very frequently; all which he employed to ſo much effect, that they terminated at laſt in his beloved's conſenting to an elopement, for which every thing was arranged, when the capricious deity ſuddenly turned round to the other ſide, and by ſome means conveyed an intimation of their intentions to Mr. Byng, who, in conſequence, hurried his daughter away to London only the day before ſhe had intended to travel a very different road.

That the lover ſighed, that Anna wept, it is needleſs to relate, for theſe are matters of courſe; but what rendered their caſe peculiarly

arly hard, was, that notwithſtanding their utmoſt aſſiduity was exerted, neither could obtain any intelligence of the other for near four months. At the expiration of that term, Rainsford experienced the moſt cruel mortification, by learning from a brother officer who had been in London, and was juſt returned to quarters, that his Anna was married to a very rich old man of the name of Mortimer.

He raved, ſwore, called her falſe, fickle, avaricious, every harſh epithet, in ſhort, which the firſt paroxyſm of mortified and diſappointed love ſuggeſted; and, in the uſual form obſerved on ſuch occaſions, renounced the whole ſex for ever. But a letter which he received a few days after, diſpelled his anger, and ſo far ſoftened the vow he had made againſt all the ſex, that Anna, for whoſe ſake it was firſt made, was now excepted from the general denunciation, and the deity who keeps the regiſter of lovers' vows, was accordingly ordered to make this *ſmall* alteration in the record.

The purport of the letter which wrought this change, was a detail, in animated and pathetic

thetic language, from the hand of his unfortunate miſtreſs, of the perſecutions and torments ſhe had endured, before ſhe yielded to the ſacrifice required, to which ſhe had only been brought at laſt to conſent, in order to ſave the life of her father, whoſe paſſions had been wrought up to ſuch a pitch by the length of time ſhe held out, that the moſt alarming conſequences ſeemed likely to enſue. She entreated Rainsford to pity, forgive, and forget her, and ſincerely wiſhed him happy in a wife who might prove more worthy of him. In her entreaties for pity and forgiveneſs, ſhe no doubt was perfectly ſincere, but credit can hardly be given her for equal ſincerity in her requeſt to be forgotten; on the contrary, her lover's compliance with this requeſt, would, probably, have been one of the greateſt mortifications ſhe could have experienced. But it was not one in reſerve for her; — Rainsford followed her about for ſome time in a diſguiſe, under the veil of which he ſaw her frequently, without ſuſpicion ariſing in any one that he was ſo near. In this manner he thoroughly convinced himſelf, from the penſive-

neſs

neſs he obſerved in her countenance, and which was quite unnatural, that ſhe had not deceived him in what ſhe alleged in her letter, but was really the victim of parental perſecution, as ſhe had deſcribed herſelf.

But in following her thus, he only fed a flame which was conſuming him; and in order to take him out of the way of ſo dangerous an indulgence, his friends perſuaded him to accept a very advantageous offer of going out to India, to which he was at firſt very reluctant, but at laſt conſented, convinced from his own reflection, as well as the arguments they urged, that it was for his intereſt to endeavour to ſubdue his unfortunate paſſion; a conqueſt which he was much more likely to atchieve, the farther he ſhould be removed from it's object. From the weſtern hemiſphere, therefore, he croſſed to the eaſtern; and had been ſtationed at Allahabad about half a year, when he became acquainted with Charles Meadows.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER XII.

Suspicion is a guest
That in the breast of man, of wrathful man,
Too oft his welcome finds; yet seldom, sure,
In that submissive calm that smooths the mind
Of maiden innocence.

MASON.

FROM their head quarters, our two friends, in their leiſure hours, made frequent excurſions to ſee the country round, and gain all the information they could reſpecting the manners and cuſtoms of its inhabitants. In one of theſe, they ſtopped for a few days at a ſmall Hindoo town, about five miles diſtant from Allahabad, amid ſcenery the moſt beautiful and romantic, which imagination could picture to itſelf. Here Charles indulged in all the enthuſiaſm with which the wild beauties of nature inſpire ſuch a ſoul as his; he ſketched views,

views, he wrote poetry, he wandered up and down, at early dawn, at ſober eve, or in the deeper ſhades of night, wiſhing, ardently wiſhing, that his Amelia were with him, to partake and complete his tranſports.

In one of their evening rambles, they ſtrayed to a beautiful and romantic ſcene about two miles from the town. It was a ſmall valley, bounded by vaſt rocks formed into a thouſand fantaſtic ſhapes, and ornamented with various relics of Hindoo ſculpture and architecture. Down the ſide of one, ruſhed a broad and full caſcade, which fell into a ſtream that meandered through a jungle in the midſt of the valley, till it joined the waters of the Ganges; and the caſcade, when ſeen from the oppoſite ſide of the valley, appearing to fall among the trees of the jungle, formed a moſt pictureſque object. The rainy ſeaſon being juſt over, ſo that all the ſprings which fed it were thoroughly repleniſhed, it now fell with more than common rapidity, and the moon-beams playing on the foaming waters, added a mildneſs and ſublimity to the ſcene which could not be exceeded.

Charles

Charles and Rainsford ſtood at the end of the jungle, loſt in admiration of the objects they beheld; and the former was burſting into an extempore ſonnet on the occaſion, when he was ſtopped by beholding a female form come forth from the mouth of a cavern which ran underneath the rocks on his left hand, the entrance to which was juſt within the jungle. On ſeeing two men, ſhe ſtarted, and retreated into the cavern; but they called to her in the Hindoo language, entreating her not to be affrighted, for they would not for worlds injure beauty and innocence. She, however, did not re-appear, on which they went to the entrance of the cave and addreſſed her again, requeſting her not to be alarmed, but to come forth and purſue her deſtined courſe, adding, that they were Engliſhmen, and the ſworn protectors of her ſex.

It was probable, as appeared from ſubſequent circumſtances, the mention of their country which induced the fair Hindoo to appear again, and enter into converſation with them, when ſhe aſked many queſtions, as, Whence they came? whither they were going?

ing? and, whether they really were, as they ſaid, Engliſhmen? When ſhe was ſatisfied on theſe points, ſhe ſaid with a ſigh, "Ah that you would take me with you!—I would fain go and live amongſt your countrymen!"

She uttered this wiſh with ſo much artleſs ſweetneſs and ſimplicity, that it was impoſſible not to feel intereſted for her; and Charles eagerly anſwered, that he would convey her in ſafety whitherſoever ſhe ſhould chooſe.—"And yet," ſhe ſaid, "what is it I wiſh for?—What can I do amongſt the Engliſh?—I do not know any body!—And yet I fain would go amongſt them!"

The anxiety which ſhe expreſſed to forſake her own tribes, and go and reſide among perſons of ſuch different manners and opinions, appeared to both the young men ſo extraordinary, and ſo oppoſite to the general character of her nation, that it excited in them the greateſt curioſity to know her ſtory, which, at length, they drew from her by dint of repeated entreaties and ſolemn aſſurances of protection.

She ſaid, ſhe was the daughter of a man of the

the Bhyſe, or merchant's caſte, and her name was Indamora. At eight years old ſhe was betrothed by her father, to a man for whom ſhe conceived the ſtrongeſt averſion, even from the firſt moment that ſhe beheld him. But this had given her little uneaſineſs till lately, when drawing near to the completion of her fourteenth year, ſhe was to go and live with him as his wife. Then all the horrors of ſuch an alliance ruſhed forcibly on her mind; nor could ſhe bear the idea of ſpending her whole life with a man perfectly odious to her. In ſhort, the proſpect of the miſery which ſhe conceived ſhe muſt endure as his wife, had ſuch an effect on her mind, as to throw her into a violent fever, and in a few days ſhe was pronounced to be dying, when the Bramins inſiſted that ſhe ſhould be laid on the banks of the Ganges, in order to be ſwallowed up by thoſe ſacred waters.

Accordingly, ſhe ſaid, four days before ſhe was laid on the brink of the river, to await her fate at the returning tide; but ſo different was the event from what was intended, that the refreſhing breezes which ſhe there inhaled,

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united with the tranquillity to which her mind was reſtored, by reflecting on her releaſe from ties ſhe abhorred, gave an immediate check to the raging flames of the fever, ſo that before the tide returned to ſweep her away, ſhe found herſelf ſo far revived as to be able to riſe from the ground, with a fair proſpect for the perfect recovery of her health. But what, alas! could this avail? She muſt either lie there and periſh, or if reſcued from the arms of death, become an outcaſt from her tribe for ever, and an object of their contempt and perſecution! But the love of life is ſtrong, and if an outcaſt, ſtill ſhe ſhould have the conſoling reflection, that ſhe was no longer fettered by thoſe bonds which had been the cauſe of all her ſorrow.

"I aroſe then," ſhe continued, "from the ſpot where I lay, and climbed up the bank of the river till I was out of the reach of the waters; but ſatisfied that I was not ſafe till I ſhould be alſo removed from obſervation, I ſoon began to look about for a place of concealment, and took ſhelter in a wood, where I lay undiſcovered for the reſt of the day and the

the greateſt part of the night. But as the dawn approached, I roſe up, determined to get away from the town, and wandered on by the ſide of the river till I came to this ſpot, where I have been ever ſince, hardly knowing what muſt become of me, and earneſtly wiſhing to get amongſt the Engliſh, where I had no doubt of finding ſome friendly boſom to ſhelter and protect me."

"Nor ſhall you be deceived," ſaid Charles eagerly; "come with me, I will be the friend and protector you want."

No more was requiſite. The artleſs Indamora, free from ſuſpicion, relied at once on his profeſſions, and did not heſitate a moment to accept his offer; but as ſhe told him ſhe muſt not be ſeen in the neighbouring town, Charles immediately conducted her to his own quarters at Allahabad, whither Rainsford followed them the next day.

It was not till the dawn of morning ſhewed more plainly to our hero, the features of the unfortunate Hindoo, that he had a perfect idea of the beauty he had reſcued from miſery, although, by the light of the moon, he was impreſſed

preſſed with a ſtrong expectation of beholding a face and form little ſhort of perfection. He was not deceived; Indamora had juſt completed her fourteenth year; an age when beauty is arrived at its meridian in thoſe eaſtern countries. Her complexion, though darker than that of the generality of Europeans, was remarkably fair for a native of Hindoſtan; ſhe had full eyes, ſoft, animated, and expreſſive, with fine, long, dark eye-laſhes, and never were ſweetneſs and ſimplicity more ſtrongly pourtrayed on any countenance than upon hers. Her figure was tall and graceful, and ſhewn to particular advantage by the negligence of her dreſs, which was a looſe robe of muſlin tied round her waiſt, her throat and arms being quite bare. A more intereſting object than ſuch a creature, in ſuch a ſituation, could hardly be contemplated; and Charles was by no means of a diſpoſition to behold her with inſenſibility. But, however ſenſible to the impreſſion of ſuch charms, let it not be ſuppoſed that a thought diſhonourable to her, or to himſelf, found entrance into his mind; on the contrary, his firſt anxiety was to place

her

her in a ſituation where ſhe might be out of the reach of calumny, though ſtill under his protection.

Such an one he ſoon found in the houſe of the widow of an Engliſh officer, to whom he entruſted the fair Hindoo's ſtory, which excited ſo ſtrong an impulſe of compaſſion in her boſom, that ſhe conſented to undertake the care of her while ſhe ſhould continue at Allahabad. Here Charles frequently viſited his lovely charge, but was cautious never to ſee her but in the preſence of her hoſteſs, who daily grew more intereſted for her, and having no children of her own, would gladly have adopted and detained her at Allahabad, when Charles was about to quit it. To this, however, Indamora objected, urging, that while ſhe continued there, ſhe was ſo near the town where her father lived, that ſhe was in conſtant danger of being diſcovered by him, and condemned again to the fate from which ſhe had reſcued herſelf; and looking anxiouſly at Charles, ſhe reminded him of his promiſe, that ſhe ſhould accompany him at his return to Calcutta.

It was true that he had made her ſuch a promiſe, and he reſolved therefore to adhere to it, as he found that ſhe could not be prevailed on to make herſelf eaſy in any other ſituation. Perhaps it may appear, in the ſequel, that fear for her perſonal ſafety was not the ſole, or even the moſt powerful motive, which actuated the young Hindoo in her deſire to go to Calcutta; for it is very certain, that while her deliverer remained at Allahabad, ſhe had ſhewn no anxiety on that account, but appeared perfectly eaſy and happy. Charles then endeavoured to perſuade the widow alſo to join their party, and continue to retain Indamora under her care; but this ſhe declined, as ſhe had been ſettled many years at Allahabad; and being advanced in life, did not like to make a total alteration in her ſituation, and ſeek out new connections.

No alternative, therefore, remained, but to take Indamora with him, and provide for her at Calcutta, in as eligible a manner as he could; and for that place they departed ſoon after, accompanied by Rainsford, who had juſt

juſt made an exchange of commiſſions with an officer in a regiment ſtationed there, and whither, conſequently, his duty now ſummoned him.

THE RECTOR's SON.

CHAPTER XIII.

In climes remote, where Ganges rolls his wave,
At once the Indian's idol and his grave,
A custom reigns which harrows up the soul,
And bends e'en nature to its stern controul!
When fate cuts short the Hindoo's thread of life,
One tomb ingulphs the husband and the wife;
The widow, warm in youth, muſt yield her breath,
And, ſelf-devoted, ſeek her Lord in death:
In gay attire ſhe mounts the awful pile,
Nor dares with tears the horrid rites defile,
Her heaving bosom must repress the sigh,
And learn with stoic apathy to die.

FITZGERALD.

WHEN they arrived at Chunar, Indamora informed them that ſhe had a ſiſter living there, whom ſhe wiſhed earneſtly to ſee; "For," ſhe ſaid, "I think poor Zelinda would not be unkind to me; ſhe is married to a man ſhe hates, and from whom ſhe did all in

in her power to obtain a ſeparation, but could not effect it; and I think, as ſhe is ſo unfortunate herſelf, ſhe would pity, not blame me."

"And ſhe ſhall ſee you, if it be in my power to bring about an interview," ſaid Charles, always eager to oblige; and having received all proper inſtructions for finding her ſiſter, he ſet about the ſearch immediately, from which he ſoon returned, telling the affectionate girl, that ſhe might now make herſelf eaſy, for Zelinda would ſoon be releaſed from her diſagreeable bondage, as her huſband was dying.

Indamora received this intelligence, which Charles expected would be ſo grateful to her, with the wildeſt tranſports of agony; ſhe wrung her hands, ſhe beat her breaſt, ſhe threw herſelf on the ground, from which, Charles raiſing her, earneſtly enquired into the cauſe of her diſtreſs, when ſhe exclaimed, "Bapogee dying! then Zelinda muſt die too!"

"Zelinda die! your ſiſter die!"

"Oh, yes; when ſhe married, her huſband made her ſwear a dreadful oath, that if he

ſhould die before her, ſhe would burn herſelf with his body!"

"Curſed tyrant!—barbarous cuſtom!—" exclaimed Charles; "but is there no poſſibility of diſpenſing with ſuch an oath?"

"Oh no, ſhe muſt die!—our Bramins will ſee that ſhe fulfils her duty.—I once thought my fate hard, but how much more terrible is hers!"

"By Heaven then, ſhe ſhall not die!"—ſaid Charles.—"No, if this arm has power to ſave her!—Sooner ſhall a hundred of your curſed Bramins bite the duſt, than beauty and innocence fall a ſacrifice to their avarice and brutality."

"Oh, do not hope to ſave her; how could ſhe conſent to live when ſhe muſt violate her oath!"

"Violate her oath!—accurſed be the heart that could think of extorting ſuch an oath; and ſtill more accurſed thoſe who could think of enforcing its fulfilment!—No, no, Indamora, ſuch an one cannot be binding, and ſo both you and Zelinda herſelf would acknowledge after a moment's reflection."

"But

"But how would you ſave her?—Indeed indeed, it cannot be, you will only hazard your own life."

"And I had rather loſe it, than preſerve it with the recollection that I had made no attempt to reſcue an innocent victim ſo unjuſtly doomed to death.—Oh Rainsford, Rainsford, you are cool and diſpaſſionate, your judgment is always clear, always awake, help me then to form ſome plan whereby to execute my purpoſe!"

"Would to heaven," ſaid Rainsford, "that I could do ſo!"—He pauſed, he conſidered for ſome minutes, then ſaid,—"If Indamora could ſee her ſiſter, ſhe might gain us information, which might afford us hints for forming ſome plan."

"'Tis true, let us go then, Indamora; you ſhall endeavour to ſee poor Zelinda, to conſole her, and to learn ſuch particulars reſpecting her approaching fate as may be uſeful to us."

When they came to the houſe, Zelinda was gone thence to attend on her huſband, who, at his own requeſt, was carried to a ſpot juſt

out of the town, on which he had fixed for the performance of the funeral rites, and where he wiſhed to breathe his laſt. They enquired out the way which they were gone, and followed towards the ſpot; there they ſaw the ſick man lying on the turf, near the river, with his head ſupported by Zelinda, who ſat by him; but ſhe was ſo ſurrounded by her own and her huſband's relations, and a croud of Bramins, that it was impoſſible to approach her. Charles, however, made ſome enquiries of the ſpectators who were gathered together, relative to the manner in which the ſacrifice was to be performed, when they told him that an arbour of reeds was to be conſtructed on the ledge of a rock to which they pointed, at the height of about fifteen feet above the water, into which the body would be conveyed on a bier, when the wife ſitting down at his feet, fire would be placed to the reeds, and the dead and living bodies conſumed together*.

They

* It is to be obſerved, that the manner in which this horrid ceremony is performed, varies according to the part of the country, and to the different caſtes to which the

They concluded the relation with a high eulogium on the bleſſings of a religion, which granted ſuch a noble privilege to a woman as to die with her huſband.

This was too much for Charles, he quite trembled with indignation, and could ſcarcely forbear burſting into expreſſions correſpondent to his feelings; he reſtrained them, however, till he returned to Rainsford, and could pour them out to him and Indamora alone, and unheard by thoſe to whom it would have been unſafe that they ſhould be known. They began to form various plans for the reſcue of the innocent victim, but could reſt on none, unleſs they could gain over a ſufficient number of their own countrymen, who were reſident in the place, to form a party for the purpoſe of arming themſelves and lying in ambuſh, in order to ſeize and carry her off as ſhe was going to the ſacrifice; and in the evening they went altogether to reconnoitre the place,

the parties belong. In ſome places both bodies are laid together on an open pile, and conſumed in view of the ſpectators.

in hopes of finding ſome ſpot where ſuch an ambuſh might be placed.

By that time, the crowd had diſperſed; Zelinda was retired to her own houſe again, and the dying man left under the care of two attendants, who ſat watching, the one at his head the other at his feet, too much abſorbed in this duty to attend to any thing beſides. Our adventurers therefore did not meet with any interruption in their ſurvey, which they had not carried on long, before they diſcovered a cavern that ran directly under the rock where the victim was to be immolated.

"This will do," ſaid Charles, "here we can ſtation our ambuſh, and nothing now remains but to engage ſufficient numbers."—But Rainsford anſwered not, he was loſt in contemplation; at length he ſaid,

"Charles, you will not be averſe to labour?"

"Averſe to labour!—no, by heaven!—but what do you mean, Rainsford?"

"'Tis ſurely not impoſſible to open a channel of communication between this cavern and the outſide of the rock, by which Zelinda might

might be conveyed away unknown to any one before the flames can reach her; and, thus her fate concealed, ſhe will be ſafe from the perſecution to which our former ſcheme muſt have expoſed her."

Charles ſeized his hand with extaſy; "ſaid I, not well," he exclaimed, "that your judgment is always awake! come then, let us not loſe time but ſet about our taſk immediately."

"Before we are ſufficiently aſſured of a probability of ſucceſs," ſaid Rainsford, ſmiling at his friend's eagerneſs.

"No, no, but let us inſtantly enquire into that."—They did ſo, and the more they examined, the more they were convinced that it was a taſk not difficult to be accompliſhed, if time ſufficient ſhould be allowed; they accordingly went back to the town, and providing themſelves with proper implements for the purpoſe, commenced their labours that very night.

Day after day they dreaded to hear of the death of Bapogee, before the work ſhould be completed; but he ſtill lingered on, nor expired till the tenth day after they had begun it,

by which time they had formed a hollow like a chimney from the cavern to the place where the arbour was to be conſtructed, on the mouth of which they laid a ſort of trap-door, which could be let down at an appointed ſignal, and this was ſpread over with a thin layer of earth to prevent its being diſcovered. In this hollow Charles was to be ſtationed, to let down the trap, and receive Zelinda as ſhe deſcended, while Rainsford was to attend the ceremony, in order to give the ſignal the moment that the door of the arbour ſhould be cloſed.

But though they had taken every poſſible precaution to enſure ſucceſs to the enterprize, it was ſtill ſo replete with hazard, that they were filled with anxiety for the event. An inſtant of delay after the widow ſhould enter the arbour muſt be fatal, nor could any caution guard entirely againſt it; and ſuppoſing no impediment of that kind to occur, but that ſhe ſhould ſink into the cavity at the right moment, ſtill there was a hazard of her being ſuffocated with the ſmoke, a hazard too from which Charles would not be altogether free:

Nor

Nor was this all; for, theſe dangers paſſed, he might miſs catching her in his arms, and thus ſhe might be injured by the fall. Notwithſtanding theſe riſks, however, they were ſo well convinced that they had adopted the beſt plan, out of a choice of difficulties, that they could not blame themſelves, though they might lament, if the project ſhould ultimately fail of ſucceſs.

Indamora attended all the time they were carrying on their work, the progreſs of which ſhe ſurveyed with a heart exulting with joy and gratitude; and in order that ſhe might take what ſhare was in her power, ſhe ſtood as centinel juſt within the mouth of the cavern, to be ready to give the alarm in caſe any thing ſhould occur to render a temporary ſuſpenſion of their labours expedient. Often would ſhe wiſh that ſhe could ſee her ſiſter to communicate the plan to her, that ſo ſhe might be able to ſalicitate its execution; and ſeveral efforts did ſhe make for that purpoſe, but to no effect; the Brâmins had gotten too faſt hold of their victim to permit her to be ſeen by any but thoſe of their own order, or

ſuch

ſuch of her relations as they thought might be admitted with ſafety.

Bapogee at length breathed his laſt. Zelinda bore the ſtroke which thus ſentenced her to a horrid death ere ſhe had numbered half her days, not with real fortitude, but rather with a kind of gloomy reſolution, the effect of terror and deſpair, nor ever ſuffered a ſigh or a word of repining to eſcape her. The ſevereſt part of her fate was the ſeparation from a daughter about eight years old, the ſole fruit of her marriage, whom ſhe loved to exceſs; and the only ſign of emotion ſhe ſhewed from the moment of her huſband's death, was when ſhe embraced this adored child.

On the morning of ſacrifice ſhe firſt bathed in the Ganges, and then, attended by all her relations, proceeded to offer her prayers and vows to Brahma, in one of his temples; and this ſolemn ſervice ended, ſhe came forth with ſteady ſtep and unaltered countenance to meet her fate. She was then only twenty-four years old, an age when indeed in India the prime of beauty is paſt, but ſhe was ſtill handſome and

elegantly

elegantly formed; ſhe was dreſſed in a long robe of fine muſlin, with a veil of the ſame thrown over her head, and wore about her all her ornaments either of gold or jewels.

The dead body was laid on a bier by the river ſide, round which a large concourſe of ſpectators, (Rainsford among the reſt) were aſſembled in the profoundeſt ſilence. As Zelinda approached they opened an avenue for her to paſs, when throwing aſide her veil, ſhe knelt by the body for ſome time, in the moſt ſolemn fervency of devotion; then riſing, ſhe took a firm, though affecting farewell, of her relations, taking off her ornaments and diſtributing among them: but when ſhe came to her child, then it was that all her reſolution was ſubdued, and the mother alone burſt forth. She claſped her to her breaſt with agony, ſhe ſighed, ſhe wept, nor knew how again to quit her hold; but the Bramins, impatient of delay, forced her from her arms, brutally reproving a fondneſs, which their own callous hearts knew not how to feel. Indignation now reviving her reſolution, ſhe caſt a look of mingled ſorrow and diſdain upon them,

and

and commanding the body to be borne to the arbour, ſhe immediately followed it, when the door was cloſed and the fire inſtantly put to the reeds.

Rainsford could not behold ſuch a ſcene unmoved; indeed, to a heart of ſenſibility a more affecting one could ſcarcely be exhibited, and he became ten thouſand times more anxious than ever that ſhe ſhould be ſaved and re-united to her child. As the door cloſed, he made the appointed ſignal, by blowing certain loud notes on a horn with which he had provided himſelf for the purpoſe, when Charles let down the trap-door, and in a moment ſhe was ſafe in his arms. He immediately deſcended with her into the cavern, while the flames conſumed the body of her huſband.

The aſtoniſhment of Zelinda at finding herſelf reſcued from death in ſo extraordinary a manner, after her fate ſeemed abſolutely inevitable, and by a young man to whom ſhe was an entire ſtranger, was ſo great that ſhe could ſcarcely believe her ſenſes. She even doubted, at firſt, whether to rejoice in her eſcape,

eſcape, as her violated oath, and the conſequent wrath of Brahma, together with the doubt about the hands into which ſhe had fallen, were the immediate impulſes which ſtruck her mind; but the ſight of Indamora, who received her with outſtretched arms, when ſhe was deſcended, inſtantly diſpelled her fears as to ſafety, and they embraced each other with the moſt unbounded tranſport.

The moſt difficult taſk was to ſatisfy her religious ſcruples; but the love of life at length overbalanced them, and ſhe poured out her ſoul in effuſions of gratitude to her deliverers, conſenting at the ſame time to Indamora's entreaties, that ſhe would accompany her, to end her days among the Engliſh. Yet ſtill a ſubject of anxiety remained, that ſhe muſt leave her daughter behind, and while ſeparated from her ſhe could ſcarcely think the life to which ſhe was reſtored valuable.

But Rainsford, who had witneſſed her maternal anguiſh, had ſecretly reſolved from that moment, if ſhe ſhould be ſaved, that he would leave no endeavours uneſſayed to reſtore her

child

child to her arms; and having now joined them, he gave her this aſſurance, deſiring ſuch inſtructions from her as might facilitate his ſucceſs. Having received theſe, he returned into the town to purſue his reſearches, while Charles remained, as he had previouſly determined, all day in the cavern with the fair ſiſters, and at night embarked with them on the Ganges, and proceeded with all poſſible expedition to Patna, where they had agreed to wait for Rainsford.

He, on his part, began to ſound the characters of the perſons to whoſe care the young Zelinda was entruſted, and finding them by no means inacceſſible to corruption, he practiſed ſo ſucceſsfully on that vulnerable part, that he ſoon obtained the child for a ſum of money, and a promiſe to remove her to ſuch a diſtance, that the affair ſhould never be known. He was no ſooner in poſſeſſion of his prize than he haſtened to Patna, where all his toils were amply repaid by the tranſports to which he was witneſs both in the mother and daughter; while the mercenary relations who had ſold her, as they ſuppoſed, for a future

miſtreſs

miſtreſs to the Engliſhman, reported that ſhe had died of grief for the loſs of her mother.

The lapſe of time which theſe adventures occaſioned, determined our two friends to abandon an intention they once had, of performing the greateſt part of their journey by land, in order to ſee the country, as it was become neceſſary that they ſhould proceed to Calcutta immediately in the more expeditious mode of going by water: They embarked, therefore, without delay, and ſoon arrived in ſafety at the place of their deſtination.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER XIV.

Ye who have felt the dear luxurious smart,
When angel charms oppress the powerleſs heart,
In pity here relent the brow severe,
And o'er Fernando's weakness drop a tear.

MICKLE'S LUSIAD.

CHARLES's firſt object on arriving at Calcutta, was to place his three Hindoos in a proper ſituation, where, by means of the works in which they had been accuſtomed to employ themſelves, and which could be made ſo uſeful in their benefactor's mercantile concerns, they ſoon ſupported themſelves without being burthenſome to him; and here, in a ſhort time, Zelinda and her daughter appeared perfectly happy.

But, alas! it was not ſo with poor Indamora. She had a heart full of tenderneſs and affection;

affection; Charles had reſcued her and her ſiſter from deſtruction, and ſhe felt theſe to be obligations for which ſhe could never be ſufficiently grateful. He was, beſides, every day ſhewing them freſh inſtances of kindneſs and attention, and thus her gratitude was continually increaſing; and her attachment keeping pace with it, ſhe became in a ſhort time diſtractedly in love with him.

He, on his part, ſpent all his leiſure hours with them, ſolely from the impulſe of that benevolence which was ſo predominant in his character, and which led him to conſider the extraordinary circumſtances in which they were placed, as claiming his particular attention: Yet obvious as was Indamora's attachment, it was a long time before he had himſelf any idea of it; not that he was blind to the charms of the Hindoo, for he had a heart too ſuſceptible of female attractions to be totally inſenſible to them, but he had alſo too nice a ſenſe of honour, ever to admit an idea of ſeduction into his boſom; nor was he ſo much given up to vanity, as to ſuppoſe that no woman could ſee him but ſhe muſt immediately be in love with

with him; yet, at length, her paſſion, which ſhe had little wiſh and leſs power to conceal, became ſo apparent, that he could not fail of perceiving it.

But this diſcovery, which to ſome men might have been gratifying from motives of vanity, and to others from placing a lovely girl ſo much in their power, could not afford him ſatisfaction on either of theſe, or indeed on any other principle; on the contrary, his ſenſibility of heart was too much awakened, not to experience ſenſations of the moſt exquiſite concern. The idea that he was the occaſion of ſuffering to any human being was inſupportable to him, much more when that being was an artleſs innocent young woman, to whom he had undertaken to be the guardian and protector; nor knew he how to act in ſuch embarraſſing circumſtances, ſo as at once to acquit himſelf of cruelty to Indamora, and inconſtancy to Amelia. Sometimes he reſolved never more to ſee the poor Hindoo; but then her tranſports at ſeeing him, and anguiſh when he was quitting her, were ſo evident, that it ſeemed next to barbarity not to gratify

gratify her with his company as often as poſſible. Thus he continued to ſee her repeatedly, by this means only feeding her flame, and increaſing his own danger, from keeping too tremblingly alive that ſenſibility and intereſt with which her ſituation inſpired him.

At length he reſolved, the firſt opportunity he ſhould have for a private converſation with her, to talk the ſubject over very ſeriouſly, and give her a faithful detail of his own ſituation, in hopes that by making her ſenſible of the impoſſibility of his ever returning her affection, he might inſpire her with reſolution to combat a paſſion ſo unfortunately placed.

But day after day elapſed, and no ſuch opportunity preſented itſelf. Still he ſaw her every day, and every day her paſſion was more and more evident, and her efforts to inſpire him with a like paſſion increaſed; while he became penſive, dejected, miſerable, if not abſolutely loving her, yet feeling a tender intereſt in her with which his heart reproached him, as a ſort of inconſtancy to Amelia. At length the wiſhed-for opportunity preſented itſelf, when on going one evening to the houſe he

he found Indamora alone, who told him that the little Zelinda was ill, and the anxious mother ſo occupied with watching by her bedſide, that ſhe hoped he would excuſe her abſence.

Thus unexpectedly called on, he was at firſt embarraſſed how to enter on the ſubject; and long as he had wiſhed for this opportunity, he was almoſt tempted to curſe the moment when it was granted. But after a while, ſummoning all his reſolution, he approached her, and gently taking her hand, began by ſome ſoothing expreſſions of kindneſs, and then proceeded to lay open his heart, conjuring her, in the moſt emphatic manner, not to think any more of cheriſhing a paſſion which ſhe thus ſaw plainly he could never return, but to think of him only as a Friend, which ſhe ſhould never fail to find him.

She liſtened with a heart throbbing with anguiſh and eyes ſwimming in tears, till quite overpowered, ſhe hid her face in his boſom, and throwing her arms round his neck, remained for ſome time in this poſition, while ſcarcely were either of them aware of the ſituation

tuation in which they had placed themſelves. At length, raiſing her head, ſhe replied, that no idea of his making her his wife had ever entered her mind; ſhe knew that that was impoſſible, and that title was a matter of perfect indifference to her: She loved him to ſuch an exceſs indeed, that no wife could ever feel a more tender or ardent attachment, but it was him alone ſhe loved; and could ſhe be ſatisfied that he was not quite indifferent to her, but that ſhe might hope, if not for an equal return of paſſion, at leaſt for ſuch a ſhare of affection as was not incompatible with his fidelity to Amelia, ſhe would never aſk, ſhe would never think of more.

He entered on a thouſand proteſtations of kindneſs to her, endeavouring to compoſe her agony, and aſſuring her that, Amelia excepted, no one enjoyed ſo large a ſhare of his affection as herſelf; and after pouring out many effuſions of reciprocal friendſhip for each other, they ſeparated: Charles, rejoiced that he had come to this explanation; and ſhe, no leſs happy in the aſſurance that ſhe enjoyed, tho'

not the firſt, yet a very high place in his affections.

But young Zelinda's indiſpoſition continuing, theſe private interviews were every day repeated; and, ſatisfied that they only met as friends, Charles abandoned himſelf, without reſerve, to profeſſions of friendſhip, happy to find that theſe ſeemed, in a great meaſure, to calm the before agitated boſom of the Hindoo. But ſhe, who from the cuſtoms in which ſhe had been educated, had no idea that tho' he was to have but one wife, (and ſhe knew that one alone was allowed to an Engliſhman) he might not have as many miſtreſſes as he choſe, interpreted the aſſurances he had given her of affection and friendſhip, as an aſſent to conſidering her in that light, and expected every day when ſhe ſhould receive a full return of her paſſion. Thus ſhe gave way to the moſt unbounded freedom in her careſſes and expreſſions of attachment, which he, now lulled into a fatal ſecurity in himſelf, received as merely innocent tokens of an innocent affection, which there was no occaſion to repreſs.

Would

Would that a veil could be drawn over the ſequel!—While Charles diſtruſted himſelf he was ſafe; but confidence, aided by opportunity, repeated advances on Indamora's part, and, on his own, a heart overflowing with affectionate ſenſibility, proved his bane. Poſſibly, had Rainsford been then at Calcutta, his diſcerning eye might have ſeen the precipice towards which his friend was driving, and awakened him to a ſenſe of his danger, ere he was precipitated down the dreadful deſcent: But he was unfortunately abſent for a ſhort time; nor returned till he found Charles plunged into a delirium, from which not all his high ſenſe of honour, his horror at the idea of injuring any being alive, and real affection for Amelia, had been able to preſerve him.

But young Zelinda's health being reſtored, and theſe private meetings therefore brought to a concluſion, Charles began to recover from the ſtate of apathy in which he had been for ſome time ſunk, and remorſe immediately ſtruck his awakened ſenſes. He looked back on the ſcene which had paſſed, as a man juſt recovered from a fit of intoxication, and de-

teſted himſelf for the exceſſes to which he had yielded. A thouſand and a thouſand times, did he wiſh that he could blot from the annals of his life, the ſhort and guilty period which he had juſt paſſed, and re-gain the height from which he had fallen in his own eſtimation; and though, in fact, he was rather the ſeduced than the ſeducer, he accuſed himſelf in the ſevereſt terms, as a monſter who had ſacrificed youth and innocence to his own irregular paſſions: In ſhort, he was ſo very miſerable, that Rainsford, whoſe hints on the ſubject had aſſiſted to rouſe him to a ſenſe of his faults, was now obliged to become his ſoother and conſoler, and endeavour to find what excuſes he could for their extenuation.

His own wretchedneſs too was not a little increaſed by the ſituation of poor Indamora. In the firſt moments of remorſe, he reſolved that all intercourſe between them ſhould immediately ceaſe, as experience had too fatally proved, that no ſecurity for either was to be obtained at any other rate; and he only deſired one more interview, that he might awaken her to a ſenſe of the criminality of their conduct,

conduct, and the propriety of the measure he proposed, and reconcile her mind to their eternal separation.

But when this interview took place, his heart was not proof against the agonies in which he beheld her, at the idea of seeing him no more, and he yielded to her so far as to engage that he would visit her and her sister as usual, and continue to be their guardian and friend, under her solemn assurance that she would never think of any thing further.

To this promise she rigidly adhered, yet he could not but observe how painful was the effort; and this, added to her situation likely to become a mother, which gave her increased claims to his tenderness, made every effort on his part to repress it, agonizing in the extreme; nay, there were even moments when he thought that having brought her into this state, duty and honour required him to forego all other engagements, and devote himself to her entirely. What! forego his engagements with Amelia? Think of her no more? God of heaven! and was that possible? Were her claims such as could be set aside? Was her

affection for him not equal to Indamora's?—No, honour no leſs than ardent inclination required his ſteady adherence to his firſt vows, whatever might be the conſequence to the poor Hindoo. Thus he found himſelf, through his own indiſcretion, drawn into ſuch a ſituation, that whichever way he might act, his conſcience, his ideas of honour, never could be fully ſatisfied, nor could greater torments than what he endured have been inflicted by the Inquiſition itſelf.

He continued however to ſee Indamora as he had promiſed, and to ſhew her ſuch attentions as he thought not inconſiſtent with his prior attachment, ſeeking by every means in his power to reconcile her to her fate, and to the idea of ſeeing him in time the huſband of another. And this, of itſelf, would not have given her any uneaſineſs, provided ſhe might have *ſhared* his affections; but ſhe thought it hard indeed to reſign *all* place in them, and execrated the cold cuſtoms of a country which would confine them to one alone, while nature was perpetually leading to a love of variety; forgetting that ſhe was herſelf

herſelf a martyr to that conſtancy, which could take no intereſt in any thing but the one object to which ſhe was devoted.

Yet, amidſt theſe conflicts, one conſolation remained, that ſhe ſhould have a pledge to love and cheriſh, as a memorial that ſhe had not been always conſidered with perfect indifference by this object of her adoration; and when, in proceſs of time, ſhe was delivered of a daughter, her extaſies knew no bounds, nor ever was infant claſped to the boſom of a mother with ſuch ardent emotions of maternal tenderneſs. The father too, while he contemplated the ſweetneſs and innocence of infancy, felt his affectionate heart ſo deeply intereſted, that he almoſt loſt the deteſtation, by which he was in general ſo powerfully impreſſed, of the infidelity which had called them into exiſtence.

But the greateſt trial was yet to come.—Scarcely had a year elapſed after the birth of the little Indamora, when it became but too evident that her unhappy mother's health was ſinking under the conflicts ſhe endured, and ſhe was ſlowly and ſilently moving forwards to

her laſt melancholy home. From the moment that Charles became ſenſible of the inevitable termination of this ill-fated amour, he could no longer reſtrain his feelings, but gave a looſe to all the tenderneſs and ſenſibility which her ſituation excited, and from the abſence of which it originated. His ſoothing kindneſs could not ſave her, though it perhaps reſpited the fatal ſtroke, as ſhe lingered on for more than a year, while ſhe even thought attentions from him cheaply purchaſed at the price of approaching diſſolution.

To complete Charles's miſery, during the latter part of this period, he was daily harraſſed with the reflection, that, from the now proſperous ſtate of his fortune, he was acting criminally by Amelia in not going to England to ratify the vows he had exchanged with her, whither his ardent wiſhes, no leſs than duty, would have carried him; yet, circumſtanced as Indamora was, he knew too well that to leave her at ſuch a criſis was to plunge a dagger in her breaſt. And when, at length, he beheld her expire in his arms, he was ſo deeply affected with the whole of her tragic ſtory,

ſtory, that he was ſinking faſt into a ſettled melancholy, had not a circumſtance occurred, which, awakening his jealouſy with regard to Amelia, rouſed him from his lethargic ſtate, and hurried him to England with his accuſtomed ardour and impetuoſity.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER XV.

Oh, Love, how are thy precious sweetest minutes
Thus ever crofs'd, thus vex'd with disappointments!
Now pride, now fickleness, fantastic quarrels,
And sullen coldness, give us pain by turns;
Malicious meddling Chance is ever busy
To bring us fears, disquiets, and delays.

ROWE.

THESE jealous apprehenfions were occafioned by an Engliſh officer of the name of Anneſley, who arrived at Calcutta not long after the death of Indamora. He had been recommended to the acquaintance of Mr. Sykes, a gentleman in the law department, at whoſe houſe Rainsford was a frequent viſitor; and here, therefore, Anneſley and he met, ſoon after the former's arrival.

In the courſe of the viſit, Rainsford happening

pening to mention Charles Meadows in a ſtile of familiarity, Captain Anneſley ſtarted, and exclaimed, "Good God! do you know Mr. Meadows?"

"Aſſuredly," ſaid Rainsford, "he is my moſt intimate friend."

"I am ſorry to hear it; it is not much to any man's credit to be intimate with him."

"This is language I do not underſtand, Captain."

"And I own, Sir, that it requires an apology. It was not by any means my intention to affront you, but I ſpoke haſtily from a ſtrong impulſe of ſurpriſe, at hearing any one profeſs himſelf the friend of Mr. Meadows."

"And why ſo, Sir?"

"Good God, Mr. Rainsford, a perſon of ſo infamous a character! I heard ſuch ſtories of him before I left England, that I did not expect to find any one in India even own being of his acquaintance."

"I do not know what you may have heard of him, Sir; the world is full of calumny; Meadows may not have been totally faultleſs in his conduct ſince he has been here; but if

we

we are not to aſſociate with any but faultleſs characters, we muſt each ſeek a ſeparate cavern, and live entirely by ourſelves."

"Faultleſs!—without doubt, no one can expect another to be faultleſs; but few, I hope, plunge into ſuch deſpicable ſcenes of debauchery as Mr. Meadows has done."

"Deſpicable ſcenes of debauchery, Captain Anneſley! you ſurely are miſtaken in the man. I will own, that Meadows is not wholly excuſable in his unfortunate connection with a woman who was not his wife; but circumſtances are powerful, and he was thrown by them into a ſituation, in which it would, perhaps, have required a more than common degree of virtue to have reſiſted the temptation: and, after all, I really do not think ſuch a lapſe, deſerving of the very harſh epithets which you have uſed."

"Nay, I do not ſee much in kiſſing a pretty girl, if ſhe may happen to fall in one's way; nor ſhould I have cenſured him violently on that account: But if his conduct may there admit of ſome excuſe, his behaviour to a lovely creature in England, to whom

whom he was engaged before he came hither; nay, to whom ſome people believe him actually married, has been ſo abſolutely inexcuſable, that I think he deſerves to be kicked out of ſociety for that alone."

"I really do not underſtand you, Sir, and muſt beg the favour of you to explain yourſelf."

Why, I ſhould have thought, Sir, that you, as his *intimate friend*, muſt know that he has never taken the leaſt notice of her ſince he left England; and while he is keeping a ſeraglio here, ſhe, poor thing, lives in a ſtate of the greateſt torture on his account."

"Do you then affirm, from authority, that he has never taken any notice of her?"

"I do affirm it, Sir, from the very beſt authority, from authority which he will find it difficult to contradict:—Not one line has he ever written to her ſince he left England—caſual intelligence, from round about quarters, is all ſhe has ever obtained of him."

"This is moſt extraordinary! I certainly cannot poſitively deny the truth of what you ſay, but I really think you muſt be miſinformed;

formed; I have heard him talk of Miſs St. Aubyn, a thouſand and a thouſand times, in terms of the moſt extravagant admiration, extolling, to the higheſt degree, the beauties of her face, the graces of her perſon, her faſcinating manners, and amiable diſpoſition."

"And he could not extol them too highly; ſhe is a lovely creature, that's certain; but, lovely as ſhe is, and *deſperately* as he is in love, he has contented himſelf with *talking* of her, he has never *written* to her take my word for it."

"And may I aſk, whence you have this information?"

"Oh, certainly, you may aſk, and I will readily anſwer:—My brother is married to Miſs St. Aubyn's intimate friend, with whom ſhe has lived ever ſince the death of her aunt, and it is from them that I have my information, which you ſurely will allow may be depended upon."

"This is moſt ſingular:—That Meadows is ſtrongly attached to her I am convinced; there muſt be ſome myſtery here.—However, I will know the truth of it, and I hope

all

all things will ſoon be ſet right, as my friend is going over to England on purpoſe to fulfill his engagements with her."

"He may *purpoſe* as he pleaſes; but perhaps the lady at laſt may not *purpoſe* quite as he does;—one infidelity often creates another; and when I came away, it was ſtrongly reported that ſhe was about to beſtow herſelf on a parſon, who, dear ſoul! has long been ſighing for her."

"How ſo, Sir? I thought you ſaid, juſt now, that it was generally ſuppoſed that my friend was actually married to Miſs St. Aubyn."

"'Tis true that ſuch a report was in circulation; nay, the parſon himſelf was the firſt perſon whom I ever heard mention it; but your parſons are damned ſly dogs, and perhaps he only talked of that as a blind to his own intentions. An officer, indeed, who came hither in the ſame ſhip that I did, aſſerted that ſhe certainly was married to Mr. Meadows, and that he knows the place where a child of theirs has been at nurſe for three or four years."

"You

"You aſtoniſh me beyond expreſſion, Captain Anneſley; yet ſtill I think it impoſſible that this can be true."

"Why, to tell you the truth, I do not much believe it; I always ſuſpected that the parſon was not over ſcrupulous about the truth of what he advanced; and as to the officer, I know him for one of the damnedeſt liars that ever drew breath: I tell you, however, what I heard.—The parſon certainly roundly aſſerted that this marriage had actually taken place, while the world as roundly aſſerted that this very parſon was now received by the lady as an accepted lover; and, for my part, I believe this to be the fact, for his reverence, to ſay the truth of him, is a very perſonable man, and deadly ſmooth tongued, likely enough to talk a woman over; but, by G—, if I had thought her come-at-a-ble, I'd have had her myſelf; for, to be ſure, ſhe is a prize to any body."

"Poor Charles; I know not what will become of him if this is the caſe."

"Become of him? why he'll get two or three

three other girls to ſupply her place!—I warrant him he'll never be at a loſs."

"But pray, Captain, allow me to aſk, by what means you have had ſo much information relative to Mr. Meadows? for whether true or falſe, you ſeem to have heard a great deal about him."

"My authority, Sir, I have already given up; but I will add, that the channel through which my brother and ſiſter and Miſs St. Aubyn have obtained *their* intelligence, is one that ſufficiently convinces them of Mr. Meadows's groſs depravity, although at preſent I am not at liberty to ſay to whom they are indebted for it: This, however, you may depend on, that his chance with his former miſtreſs is entirely at an end."

Here the converſation took a general turn, and Rainsford, who was anxious to know what his friend had to ſay to the heavy accuſations laid to his charge, the truth of which he did not know how to believe, yet found it difficult totally to diſbelieve, very ſoon after left the company, and returned home, where he found Charles in his own room, penſive, dejected,

dejected, with his little girl in his arms, and Amelia's picture lying on the table by him.

Rainsford ſat down. "Meadows," he ſaid, "I am come now from Mr. Sykes's, where I have been in company with an Engliſh officer who knows your Amelia."

"How!" ſaid Charles, ſtarting from his reverie, "knows Amelia, did you ſay? and what ſays he of her?—How long has he left England?—tell me all?—Could not I ſee him?—I want to aſk him a thouſand queſtions."

"Before you put your *thouſand* queſtions to him, however, do not be offended if I put *one* to you. Have you ever written to Miſs St. Aubyn ſince you left England?"

"And why this queſtion, Rainsford?"

"It is not dictated by mere curioſity, believe me;—I aſk it as a friend, and have good reaſons for aſking it."

"And I do not know of any reaſon which ſhould make me heſitate to anſwer it with the moſt perfect ſincerity. I wrote to her twice on my voyage, firſt from Santa Cruz, and then from the Cape; and I wrote her three letters

letters during the firſt year of my reſidence in India, but I have not written to her ſince."

"Ah, Charles, Charles, I am afraid!—Was it not in little more than a year after your coming hither that you became connected with Indamora?"

"It was; but that had not any concern whatever with my ceaſing to write to Amelia."

"Is that really true?"

"As that I am here."

"And has not Amelia ever written to you?"

"Never but once.—But why theſe queſtions?"

"Becauſe this Captain Anneſley, whom I have been talking with, told me that you had never written to Miſs St. Aubyn ſince you left England, and I could not believe it."

"And did he bring it as a charge againſt me?—Then you ſhall ſee why I have ceaſed to write to her."

On this he went to a cabinet, and took out a letter, which he gave to Rainsford, ſaying, "This I received very ſoon after my arrival here."

here."—Rainsford opened it, and read as follows:

My Dear Charles,

YOUR kind and affectionate expreſſions in the letter which you wrote to me, on the day of your departure, were ſufficient to convince me, if I had wanted conviction, that it was not owing to any negligence on your part, that we were prevented the melancholy conſolation of bidding each other a laſt adieu. Yet, perhaps, it was better for us both that we ſhould be ſo ſeparated, for the pain of parting might have been aggravated, rather than ſoothed, by another interview.

The only return that I can make for your generous profeſſions of attachment and conſtancy to me, are reciprocal profeſſions on my part. Yes, believe me, Charles, that I ſhall exiſt but in the hope of our being one day united, never more to be ſeparated. With theſe ſenſations, of the truth of which I have given you ſufficient reaſon to be perfectly convinced, you will judge (by what you feel yourſelf) of the pain which it muſt give me

to

to be compelled to ſay, that we muſt truſt to caſual opportunities of hearing of each other, for I can neither write to you nor receive letters from you. You have enemies here who would make ſuch an intercourſe truly dangerous; and it is better not to riſk, for a tranſient ſatisfaction, how great ſoever it might be at the moment, our permanent intereſts and happineſs. I dare not ſay more; but I truſt you will believe, that no time or circumſtances can alter the ſincerity with which I am,

My dear CHARLES,
Your truly affectionate,
AMELIA ST. AUBYN.

"And how did you act in conſequence of receiving this letter?" demanded Rainsford as he finiſhed reading it.

"Would the young bloſſom which has been cheriſhed by warm and genial ſuns in the early part of the year, forbear to burſt forth on being told of the dangers it might incur from the cold winds of March?—Equally impoſſible is it to repreſs the preſent ardour of a lover's

a lover's imagination by the view of perils afar off.

"I wrote to my Amelia, expoſtulating with her on the cruelty of the injunction ſhe had laid upon me. I repreſented to her that I thought the dangers ſhe mentioned muſt be quite imaginary; and that writing to her, and hearing from her, were the only conſolations I could experience in our long ſeparation, and, finally, entreated her to releaſe me from a command ſo mortifying and afflicting.

"But I wrote, alas! in vain;—I received no anſwer.—Still unwilling to give up the point, I wrote a ſecond and a third time, but with no better ſucceſs; and at length, in deſpair, I relinquiſhed the purſuit, concluding that ſome cruel cauſe, of which I could not any way form an idea, barred our intercourſe with each other. But I have never ſuſpected that cauſe to be a change in my deareſt Amelia's ſentiments in my favour, becauſe my father has always mentioned her in his letters, as hearing of her exemplary conduct under very difficult circumſtances; and that ſhe had refuſed the offer of Mr. Blandford's hand, entirely,

tirely, as it was ſuppoſed, for my ſake. I have therefore, I think, ſufficient reaſon to flatter myſelf that ſhe expects my return to England with ſome impatience, and will rejoice in the moment when I can claim her as my wife, and we ſhall be no more ſeparated."

"And I moſt ſincerely hope that you may not be deceived," ſaid Rainsford;" but Captain Anneſley has alarmed me much on your account; nor do I know how to reconcile your ſtory with his." He then proceeded to relate all that had paſſed between them, which Charles heard with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, and exclaimed,

"Good God! What am I to think of all this!—But, perhaps, I am myſelf to blame.—Amelia enjoined me not to write to her, for danger would attend it; yet I was mad enough to perſecute her with letters for a time, and this perhaps is the conſequence. Yet how can that be!—I know not.—But this I know, that it ſeems to be high time that I were in England, to vindicate my character from wicked calumnies; nor ſhall any thing prevent my departure with the firſt ſhip that ſails.

ſails. But if this ſhould prove a veil to hide her own falſehood, the traitreſs ſhall find that I can hate as ardently as I have loved.—But away with the unjuſt ſuſpicion!—She cannot be falſe."

He loſt no time in carrying this reſolution into effect; but after recommending Zelinda and her daughter, and the little Indamora, to the care and protection of Mr. Benington, he embarked in the Bengal packet with Rainsford, who had obtained leave of abſence for a time, where we ſhall leave them on their way to England, and take a ſhort retroſpect of affairs there ſince the time of Charles's quitting it.

THE RECTOR's SON.

CHAPTER XVI.

Ah, gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe,
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy.

MILTON.

THE character of Mr. Dawkins has already been ſufficiently illuſtrated to make it apparent, that its leading principle was an attachment to ſelf-intereſt. But though this was his main ſpring of action, there were many others which ſerved under it as auxilliaries, and at times had no inconſiderable ſhare in influencing his conduct. If ever theſe ſmaller ſprings, indeed, began to be at variance with the main one, they were ſoon checked and driven back again into due ſubjection, but were left to their full operation when that was not the caſe. Among theſe was a ſtrong paſ-

ſion for ſenſual gratification in every way; and wherever this could be indulged, without claſhing with his intereſts, he reſigned himſelf wholly to its impulſe, nor was ever ſo happy as when theſe two ſprings could be brought into full action together.

To a perſon of this deſcription, Juliana Blandford and Amelia St. Aubyn could ſcarcely be objects of perfect indifference; ſo far from it, that from the moment when he firſt beheld them, he felt the power of their attractions very ſenſibly, and thought that to obtain the poſſeſſion of either, was an object well worthy of his talents. That Amelia was decidedly the more lovely of the two, he was too accurate a judge of female charms not to feel; but as Juliana was alſo ſufficiently attractive, ſo the Apoſtle of Temperance and Mortification could content himſelf with her, provided it ſhould appear, on an exact calculation of the *pours* and the *contres*, that it were more for his intereſt to pay his addreſſes to her than to her friend.

This point, then, he began impartially to inveſtigate. On the ſide of Miſs Blandford it

was

was to be conſidered, that by a marriage ſettlement ſhe was ſole heireſs to her mother's fortune, which was ten thouſand pounds; and it was probable that her ſhare of her father's perſonal property would amount to three or four thouſand more, therefore this was not a fortune to deſpiſe. But, on the other hand, neither was it ſufficient to ſacrifice all his other views to obtaining it; and it was a queſtion, what ſort of reception the idea of an alliance between himſelf and that young lady might meet with in her family. Not a very favourable one he was afraid, for Frederick's pride of anceſtry was not inferior to that of any man's living, and he could hardly therefore be pleaſed with the ſon of a little ſhop-keeper as a brother-in-law; and to offend him, might ultimately be more prejudicial to his intereſts than the acquiſition of his ſiſter's Fortune might be for their advantage. He knew that the living of Galſtone, worth five hundred pounds a year, which by the *deceaſed* Mr. Blandford was deſtined for Charles Meadows, was, by the *exiſting* Mr. Blandford, deſtined to himſelf; and he alſo reflected, that his pu-

pil, while abroad, had contracted a very great intimacy with a young Nobleman who was likely to riſe high in court favour, and by whoſe means, therefore, he might be able to advance him in the church, even to the higheſt poſts to which his ambition could aſpire.

And here aroſe two other important queſtions.—Would not Frederick be more likely to puſh him forward with ardour, when united to him by ſo cloſe a connection as being the huſband of his ſiſter, than while no other except that of tutor and pupil ſubſiſted between them? And would not the young nobleman be much more likely to patronize a man already in tolerable circumſtances, than one who was really in neceſſity?—This latter point was certain, but then as he was ſure of the valuable living of Galſtone, that would be ſufficient to engage the peer in his intereſts, without Miſs Blandford's fortune added to it; and on the former queſtion, he thought it but too probable that his marriage with Miſs Blandford might offend Frederick ſo entirely, as to occaſion a total ceſſation of all intercourſe between them. Then, though he ſhould be ſettled

tled with a tolerable income, he muſt bid adieu to all hopes of any thing farther; muſt never think of lolling in a *prebendal* or *decanal ſtall*, ſtill leſs of beholding his arms decorated with the lawn, and being ſeated on the throne of epiſcopacy.

In purſuing theſe reflections he found a ſubject of deep ſelf-reproach; for it was but too plain that he had committed an overſight, in inculcating ſo ſtrongly on his pupil, that an union between his ſiſter and Charles Meadows would be diſgraceful to his family; ſince it followed of courſe, that if the ſon of a Welch parſon was an object beneath the notice of a Blandford, his own origin was ſtill leſs ſuch as to entitle him to think of the alliance in queſtion. This then muſt be a ſtumbling-block in his way; one, moreover, which he himſelf had contributed all in his power to erect, thro' a too great eagerneſs to injure another; but there was now no help for it, and he muſt take the conſequences. The ſumming up of the whole, therefore, ended in a determination that the idea of an union with Miſs Blandford

was ground too hazardous to be ventured on with prudence.

But none of theſe objections remained in force with regard to Amelia, and he had only therefore to conſider, whether an alliance with her would be ſufficiently advantageous, on the ſcore of intereſt, to excuſe him for following whither his inclinations impelled him very powerfully. She had no fortune of her own, yet that ſhe would be heireſs to her aunt, whoſe fortune, according to all appearance, muſt be ample, did not admit of a doubt; this, however, was unfortunately only in reverſion, and depended on the continuance of Mrs. St. Aubyn's favour, and ſhould ſhe marry not entirely to her ſatisfaction, there was no ſaying whither female caprice might not lead her. It would be therefore no leſs neceſſary for him to court the aunt than the niece: But this was not difficult; he thought he knew ſufficiently how to inſinuate himſelf into the favour of any woman, and flattery would coſt him nothing; nor ſhould he have long to continue it towards her, as ſhe was to all appearance in a very declining ſtate of health,

health, the effect of a too cloſe attendance on a conſumptive huſband.

On this head therefore, he thought he had nothing to fear; and viewed, in another light, an union with Amelia promiſed to be very advantageous, for ſhe was ſufficiently connected with the Blandford family to ſtrengthen his intereſt with them; and yet not being abſolutely allied to them, her marrying a perſon of low birth could not operate to their diſgrace. Thus intereſt ſeemed to ſanction what inclination prompted, and it was finally determined, by this able reaſoner, to lay ſiege in due form to the miſtreſs of Charles Meadows.

He was ſenſible, however, that in the proſecution of this ſcheme, he had moſt formidable obſtacles to encounter; for before he could have any chance himſelf with the lady, it was neceſſary to detach her from her then lover, which did not appear to be a very eaſy taſk. But how arduous ſo-ever it might be, he had full confidence in himſelf that he ſhould be able to accompliſh it; he well knew the power of a few highly-ſeaſoned and well-

timed calumnies, nor doubted but by their means, a breach between the lovers might be effected. Then, what a double gratification ſhould he feel, from at once poſſeſſing the charms which had enraptured his imagination, and mortifying, in the moſt ſenſible manner, a man whoſe every moment of happineſs was a deep wound to the ſpleen which rankled in his breaſt.

As a preliminary ſtep to ruining Charles's character with Amelia, it muſt be ruined with the world at large, where, at preſent, it had rather a higher place than ſuited Mr. Dawkins. But the attacks which he meditated, he thought were better delayed till the young man had finally quitted the country, and was out of the way of defending himſelf; and in the interim he ſhould have time more fully to digeſt his plan of operations. As ſoon, then, as he was aſſured that Charles had left Milſingtown, no more to return, he began to bring forth the hell-born progeny over which he had ſo long been brooding. And firſt, by diſtant hints and dark expreſſions,

"As

" As, well, well, we know;—or, we could, and if we would;
" Or, if we liſt to ſpeak; or, there be, and if there might."

SHAKSPEARE.

and ſuch ambiguous givings out, he inſinuated that he knew ſomething amiſs of Charles: Inuendoes, which ſtab the character much more effectually than any direct accuſation of a ſpecific offence, ſince they leave ſo general a latitude for the varieties of the imagination to work upon, that each can put on them its own conſtruction; and thus, in a ſhort time, every offence which is to be found in the black catalogue of human vices, is frequently fixed on a character which may be, in fact, one of the moſt actively virtuous.

And ſuch was the caſe in the inſtance before us. Dawkins, however, took care to keep himſelf all the time in the back ground; he was the incendiary that ſet the match to the train which quickly blew up, and ſpread deſtruction all around, whilſt at the ſame time no one could fix on the preciſe ſpot where the devaſtation commenced. Yet it was ſo effec-

tual in its operation, that ere many weeks had elapſed after Charles's departure, it was univerſally believed in the neighbourhood of Sherborne and Milſingtown, that his depraved conduct was the occaſion of the late Mr. Blandford's not making any proviſion for him by will; and that his father, unable to keep him any longer in England, had ſent him to India to get him out of the way.

Theſe reports did not immediately reach the ears of Mr. Meadows, but he was almoſt heart broken when they did. Convinced that his ſon did not deſerve ſuch a character, he endeavoured, by all poſſible means, to vindicate his fame; but, alas! all in vain: Every one knows that it is a much eaſier taſk to blaſt the character of a fellow creature than to reſcue it from infamy.

"Truth pleads to air if prejudice arraign."

And ſuch is the general candour and goodnature of what is called the world, that while a ſtory to the diſadvantage of any one is always ſwallowed with the higheſt reliſh, a proportionate reluctance is ſhewn, to give attention to any attempt that may be made to deprive

deprive it of the highly-ſeaſoned morſel, and do juſtice to the perſon calumniated.

There is, moreover, another principle with this ſame world, equally *candid*, equally *fair*; and this is, that a man's character is never to be eſtimated by the report of his friends, for they are too partial to judge of it fairly; and in order therefore to obtain an *impartial* verdict, recourſe muſt be had to his enemies, who certainly cannot be ſuſpected of placing it in too favourable a light; and this is called Juſtice!—Oh, ſacred name!—how art thou profaned by ſuch an application!—It muſt be owned, however, that as the real motives which had influenced Charles's voyage to India, could not be exactly known to the world, and as, on the face of it, it appeared rather a wild plan, there was a conſiderable degree of plauſibility in the ſtory now promulgated.

The character of the poor young man being thus ruined in his native province, the next thing was to ſpread the calumnies to more diſtant parts, and Dawkins fixed on his pupil as the channel through which they ſhould be conveyed to the Father of Amelia. For this

purpoſe he often made Charles's profligacy the ſubject of his private converſations with Frederick, when he would artfully lament that ſo good a man as the late Mr. Blandford ſhould have been ſo much deceived, and led to countenance one ſo undeſerving of his favours. Then he would add, "But the moſt lamentable thing of all is, the ſituation into which, by this means, poor Miſs St. Aubyn has been drawn; for, what muſt be her fate ſhould ſhe ever become the wife of ſuch a man?—I tremble to think of it."—'Till at laſt, obſervations of this kind, frequently repeated, impreſſed Frederick with a conviction that it was his duty to appriſe Mr. St. Aubyn of all he had heard, that he might put a ſtop to any farther connection between his daughter and her lover.

This he accordingly did, in a letter, in which he painted the ſhocking depravity of young Meadows's character in very forcible colours, and concluded by ſaying, that, as he had no doubt of his receiving too much encouragement from Mrs. St. Aubyn, who was infatuated in her partiality to him, he ſhould not

not be ſurprized to hear of Amelia's having eloped with him to India, unleſs timely ſteps were taken for her prevention.

That Mr. St. Aubyn, who tenderly loved his daughter, ſhould be ſhocked and alarmed beyond meaſure at the receipt of ſuch a letter, and at the idea of the ruin thus impending over her head, was perfectly natural. He muſt indeed have been a monſter to have remained unmoved; and actuated by ſuch impreſſions, and being naturally of a very warm and poſitive temper, it was not ſurpriſing, that in the firſt impulſe of indignation he ſhould proceed to expoſtulate with her in a very harſh and haſty manner.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER XVII.

Such is the fate unhappy women find,
And ſuch the curse entail'd upon our kind,
That man, the lawless libertine, may rove
Free and unfetter'd through the wilds of love;
While woman, ſense and nature's easy fool,
If poor weak woman swerve from virtue's rule;
If strongly charm'd, she quit the thorny way,
And in the softer paths of pleasure stray,
Ruin ensues, reproach, and endless shame,
And one false step entirely damns her fame:
In vain with tears the loss she may deplore,
In vain look back to what she was before,
She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more.

ROWE.

THUS far the plans of Dawkins were crowned by ſucceſs, and he was therefore ſufficiently encouraged to proceed in them, although it was obvious that by far the moſt difficult part of his taſk yet remained.

To

To convince indifferent perſons that Charles was a villain, might have been atchieved by a perſon of leſs ability; for, as they had no intereſt in finding him otherwiſe, they were quite as well, perhaps better, ſatisfied that he ſhould be ſo, than not. But to convince Amelia herſelf, in defiance of all her wiſhes to the contrary, that this man, whom ſhe had been accuſtomed from her infancy to conſider as one of the moſt amiable of human beings, was in fact directly the reverſe, was a taſk, the difficulty of which might have deterred a leſs daring genius from the attempt, but which Dawkins was reſolved to undertake and execute. Not that he could even then conſider himſelf as ſecure of having accompliſhed his main point, for there were many ſteps between Amelia's deſpiſing Charles and loving him; nor was it a neceſſary conſequence, that though ſhe ſhould be convinced of her lover's unworthineſs, ſhe would therefore break off all connection with him. On the contrary, the world was but too full of examples of women, who, ſenſible to the demerits of the object of their paſſion, had yet ſacrificed all other

other conſiderations to it, and with their eyes open, ruſhed headlong on ruin; and he could not but be apprehenſive that this might again be the caſe. Yet, as he could have no chance whatever himſelf, till Charles ſhould be ruined in her eſteem, he was reſolved, at all events, to effect this; and even if no other benefit ſhould ariſe from it, the malignity and envy of his diſpoſition would at leaſt be gratified. To this, therefore, he applied himſelf with the moſt anxious ſolicitude; yet, at the ſame time, with the moſt cautious circumſpection, when he attended his pupil to London, where they arrived about a fortnight after Charles's departure.

In purſuing this object, the firſt ſtep neceſſary to be taken was, to prevent any intercourſe between the lovers, ſince either, hearing from the other, would at once mar all his projects. He did not arrive in time to prevent the letter, which Charles wrote on his firſt going on board, reaching its deſtination; but he determined, that as this was the beginning of their correſpondence, ſo it alſo ſhould be its concluſion. He artfully drew from

from Mrs. St. Aubyn, in various converſations, that her niece's attachment was ſanctioned in the fulleſt manner by her approbation, and that ſhe totally diſbelieved the reports which had been ſpread to young Meadows's diſadvantage. He determined however that, if ſhe then diſbelieved them, her incredulity ſhould not be of long continuance, for he, (as was his duty in quality of a divine) would *ſtrengthen her faith*.

Yet he ſecretly rejoiced that this incredulity had ſubſiſted, as he ſaw one important advantage thence ariſing to himſelf, viz. that the correſpondence between the lovers would be carried on openly, and through the uſual channels of communication, ſo that he ſhould only have to ſecure letters thus diſpatched; whereas had ſhe fallen at once into the general opinion of Charles, and forbid Amelia's holding any intercourſe with him, it would have occaſioned the additional labour of diving into the ſecrets of their priſon houſe, to find out the private channels through which their tender ſentiments might be conveyed.

Still no ſmall degree of addreſs was requiſite

ſite to intercept the letters, in ſuch a manner as that neither party ſhould have the leaſt reaſon to ſuſpect the real cauſe of the other's ſilence, and he had recourſe, for this purpoſe, to a woman, Fanny Warren by name, with whom he had formerly been acquainted for other purpoſes. She was one of thoſe unfortunate females who, having in her youth, in an hour, when paſſion had gotten the aſcendancy over prudence, committed one falſe ſtep, was driven out of ſociety, of which ſhe might ſtill have made a reſpectable and valuable member, had ſhe been gently led back to the ſtrait path whence ſhe had ſtrayed; for ſhe was a woman endowed with talents to plan, and perſeverance to proſecute, the moſt arduous undertakings. But when ſhe ſaw the ſtern eye of virtue turned ſtudiouſly from her, or looking on her only with the ſcornful regards of conſcious ſuperiority; when every tongue, armed againſt her, was reproaching her with her fault, when ſhe was only noticed to be upbraided, her indignant ſpirit fatally reſolved to return evil for evil, and to make war in her turn on a world from which ſhe found herſelf an outcaſt; and

ſince ſhe could not regain the ſtation ſhe had loſt in ſociety, uniformly to endeavour to mar the happineſs of others, and level their reputations with her own.

By Dawkins's direction, from whom ſhe had liberal promiſes of reward for her ſervices, ſhe inſinuated herſelf into the acquaintance of Mrs. St. Aubyn's ſervants, (who were ſtrangers to her real character) to whom ſhe made herſelf a welcome viſitor, by doing a thouſand little offices which were of great aſſiſtance to them. Now as Miſs Amelia's ſending a letter to her *Sweetheart* was always looked on in Mrs. St. Aubyn's kitchen, as an event of great importance, ſo it was conſtantly communicated to the favourite Fanny, who, on ſuch occaſions, was always moſt conveniently going by the very place where the letter was to be left, and could take it with her, and ſave the ſervants the trouble of going out. Indeed ſhe ſo *often* contrived to be the letter-carrier at other times, that it could not appear ſingular, probably was not even noticed, that ſhe was *always* ſo, when there happened to be one to India.

But

But the more difficult taſk was, to prevent Amelia's receiving letters from Charles; and to ſecure this point, our Divine ſet two other engines to work, one of which was to write a letter (which the reader has already ſeen) in Amelia's name, forbidding him to correſpond with her, and in which he had imitated her writing ſo exactly, that it was impoſſible even for Charles himſelf to doubt its authenticity. Counterfeiting hand-writings was indeed an accompliſhment which Mr. Dawkins had ſtudied with particular attention, as one which might be rendered greatly ſubſervient to the ruling purſuit of his life; and this letter was written in lieu of one of a very different complexion, put into his hands by his faithful miſſionary Fanny, in which Amelia expreſſed the tendereſt impatience to hear from her lover, and the moſt anxious injunctions never to omit any opportunity of writing to her.

But leſt this might fail of its due effect, he had recourſe, in order perfectly to ſecure his point, to a plan in India ſimilar to that which he was carrying on in England, and in which alſo the too adroit Fanny was his principal agent.

agent. There was a young man of the name of Winterton, then eſtabliſhed as clerk in Mr. Benington's houſe at Calcutta, who had formerly been a favoured lover of hers, and ſo infatuated in his attachment to her, that when he went out to India he would fain have taken her with him, offering even to marry her, abandoned as he knew her to be. This ſhe refuſed, as ſhe had juſt at that time formed an acquaintance with another man, who then enjoyed a higher place in her favour than himſelf, and whom ſhe could not therefore reſolve to leave. She had however always kept up a correſpondence with him, and, as her other lover had now deſerted her, had hinted to him, that if he would come over for her, ſhe would gladly return with him in any ſituation he ſhould wiſh.

To this young man ſhe applied, to become a ſpy over Charles, to intercept his letters to Amelia, and to tranſmit, from time to time, ſuch accounts of his proceedings in India, as ſhould ſuit the purpoſe of his employer. This *worthy* commiſſion he readily undertook, and acquitted himſelf in it with the utmoſt diſcretion

tion and punctuality: It was a poſt, indeed, well ſuited to him, as, with very moderate talents, he poſſeſſed an ample ſhare of the low cunning ſo eſſential to form the character of a ſpy; a character ſo contemptible, ſo degrading to the nature of man, that it can be aſſumed only by the refuſe of human kind.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER XVIII.

On the quick match the prude's keen censures fall,
Blind to the heavenly power that guided all.
But mild Serena scorn'd the prudish play,
To wound warm love with frivolous delay;
Nature's chaste child, not Affectation's slave,
The hand she meant to give, she freely gave.

HAYLEY.

NOT many days before Charles ſailed for India, an acquaintance had been renewed between Miſs Blandford and an officer of the name of Anneſley, whom ſhe had formerly known in Shropſhire. About a year and a half previous to the time of which we are ſpeaking, he had been ſtationed at Shrewſbury for a few months, and by the colonel of his regiment, who was an old acquaintance of Mr. Blandford's, recommended to his notice; he

he accordingly gave him a general invitation to viſit at Sherborne, of which the lieutenant had availed himſelf as often as he was able, during the ſhort period that he continued in that neighbourhood.

Though at that time only twenty-five years old, he had been a widower ſeven years. At the age of ſeventeen he had eloped with a lady about the ſame age, who died in a year after their marriage, leaving him a daughter, of whom his mother undertook the care. The loſs of a beloved wife was a very heavy affliction to a young man juſt at the age to cheriſh a very romantic paſſion, and who had not been married long enough to grow tired of the connection. But his affliction, however violent, however ſincere, could not endure for ever, and ſeven years had ſo far worn out the impreſſion, that he again became ſuſceptible of forming a tender attachment, and was certainly not a little intereſted with the charms of the lovely Juliana; while he, who was genteel in his perſon, and lively and pleaſant in his manners, was by no means unintereſting to her. But they were ſeparated before this

paſſion

paſſion had time to make much progreſs, and, probably, had they never met again, they might never have thought of each other more.

One evening, as Miſs Blandford was at Drury Lane Theatre, ſitting in anxious expectation of the curtain's riſing and diſplaying the *immortal* Siddons in the character of Mrs. Beverley, a character in which ſhe had never ſeen her before, and of which ſhe had formed the higheſt expectations, the box door opened and who ſhould enter but this very lieutenant. The names of Miſs Blandford and Mr. Anneſley were inſtantly reciprocated; they were extremely happy to meet again, and a place being vacant by the lady, it was immediately occupied by the gentleman, nor did he ever ſtir from her ſide the whole night. And, —ſhall I own it?—I am afraid ſhe was rather more attentive to the eloquence of her companion than to that of the inimitable actreſs ſhe came to ſee, and who that night even excelled herſelf.

Let her not in this inſtance be accuſed of inſenſibility to merit ſo tranſcendent.—She had felt, and owned it frequently by the ten-

der tribute of a tear, but allowance muſt be made for the all-controlling power of a reſurgent flame. In ſhort, Mr. Anneſley and Miſs Blandford were ſo well pleaſed with each other, that when he handed her to her carriage, ſhe invited him to come and ſee her at her aunt's, of which invitation, he aſſured her, he ſhould avail himſelf as ſoon as poſſible. And he was faithful to his word, for the next morning he made his appearance in Berkeley-ſquare ere the breakfaſt had well diſappeared. He apologized for his early intruſion, but was kindly told that it needed no apology; and at his departure, had a free licence given him to viſit there whenever he pleaſed.

Though not more than three weeks had elapſed between this event and Frederick Blandford's coming to London, yet, in that time, theſe two young perſons had made ſo much progreſs in their renewed acquaintance, that the Lieutenant never failed to pay his devoirs at Mrs. St. Aubyn's in ſome part of the day, where he was received in the moſt familiar and unreſerved manner. It was not very ſurpriſing, therefore, that he and Frederick

ſhould meet only two days after the latter's arrival.

Frederick had been ſitting for ſome time tête-à-tête with Juliana, and had riſen to depart, when Anneſley entered in a manner ſo unceremonious, and was received ſo unceremoniouſly by Miſs Blandford, that the brother, ſhocked and alarmed at ſuch an intimacy between his ſiſter and a man to whom he was himſelf a ſtranger, whoſe very name he had never heard before, and whom he could therefore, by no means, be certain was a proper acquaintance for a member of the illuſtrious houſe of Blandford, was determined not to leave them alone together, ſo ſat down again, reſolved to ſit him out, how long ſoever he might ſtay.

And it was no inconſiderable time that he was thus kept in purgatory, for the Lieutenant was too well pleaſed with the company he was in, to be in any haſte to quit it, and he ſat talking with his accuſtomed fluency (for he never was at a loſs for converſation) till the clock ſtriking three, reminded him that he

had an appointment at that hour, and he roſe up and took his leave.

Frederick, all this time, ſat writhing and twiſting himſelf in his chair like a perſon on the rack, and ere the door was well cloſed on Anneſley, broke out: — "And pray, Miſs Blandford, who may this pretty young ſpark be? He ſeems perfectly at his eaſe here!"

"He is a young man who viſited ſeveral times at Sherborne, when he was ſtationed for a ſhort time at Shrewſbury, about a year and half ago; he was recommended to my father by his old friend Colonel Montrevor."

"And pray, who might recommend him now to the acquaintance of my father's daughter?"

"Oh, we met and reconnoitred at the play about three weeks ago, and ſince that time my aunt has been ſo kind as to give him a general invitation to her houſe."

"That was extremely *kind* indeed! — but methinks, Juliana, he is on mighty free terms for a common acquaintance."

"Oh, I hate formality and reſerve, and the army

army, you know, always gives a great eaſe of manner to all who belong to it."

"Then I by no means wiſh my ſiſter to be acquainted with thoſe who do belong to it."

"Frederick!"

"Yes, Juliana, you may exclaim, but I mean what I ſay, I don't like theſe very forward ſparks; I proteſt, from his manner, any one would ſuppoſe that this genius, if not your huſband already, was at leaſt on the point of becoming ſo."

"And if it were ſo, what then?"

"What then!—why, I hope you do not pretend to ſay, that this Jack Sprat of an officer, who I ſuppoſe has not yet gotten above brandiſhing his colours in the air, would be a proper match for Miſs Blandford."

"And why leſs proper for Miſs Blandford than for a hundred other miſſes who are daily married to young officers?"

"Oh, your young officers may be *vaſtly* pretty huſbands for the miſſes in general; but for you, Juliana,——"

"Nonſenſe, brother,—if his being a young officer is the only objection you can make to

him, I ſhould not heſitate to marry him to-morrow, provided he were inclined to make me his *compagnon de voyage* through this ſtrange motley world."

"Juliana!"

"I ſhall anſwer you in your own way, Frederick—I mean what I ſay!"

"Then I am ſorry to find that a ſiſter of mine can ſhew ſuch depravity; a man of no family, no fortune——"

"And pray, brother, how is it that all on a ſudden you are become ſo well acquainted with Mr. Anneſley's family and circumſtances; I thought, juſt now, that you did not know any thing at all about him?"

"And for that very reaſon, I may fairly conclude him to be a man of neither family nor fortune; for had he been, I probably *ſhould* have known ſomething about him. But do you then know any thing of either?"

"Oh, yes! I told him he muſt bring his pedigree with him, to be examined before he could be admitted as a viſitor here: and we found that he reckons amongſt his anceſtors, two Earls, ſeven Biſhops, five Viſcounts, three Barons,

Barons, Knights of the Garter and Bath innumerable; and that Robert Chevalier de Annesley carried away the prize at a tournament in the reign of King Henry the Second;—and as to fortune——"

Frederick reddened with anger. "Juliana," said he, "this may be very witty; but, methinks, it is a little ill-timed, when I am serious, and shewing so much anxiety for your happiness."

"Well, then, I will be as serious as yourself, Frederick, and tell you, with the utmost solemnity of truth, that it is all one to me whether Mr. Annesley has any ancestors or not; I value a man only for his own talents and accomplishments; and as the person in question is a pleasant companion and a perfect gentleman, I desire no more."

"Ah, sister, sister, I was afraid of Charles Meadows, but I find that I had gotten quite on a wrong scent: If a brother's peace of mind can have any influence with you, let me intreat you to pay a little more deference to what is due to your family, and not rush on a marriage that may prove its disgrace."

"Frederick, you may rely on me that I never will marry a man whoſe moral character will not ſtand the teſt of inveſtigation; and then, whatever may be his family or circumſtances, I cannot diſgrace myſelf."

"Ay, well, advice and exhortation are equally thrown away on women; they are as obſtinate as mules, and always will go their own way; and ſo, ſiſter, good morning to you." And he took his hat and walked away, extremely diſconcerted.

But the objections which he urged to his ſiſter, againſt an union between her and Mr. Anneſley, had not all the influence with that young lady, which ſome perſons may think objections ſo very *powerful* and *reaſonable* ought to have had. The lieutenant ſtill continued to viſit at Mrs. St. Aubyn's on the ſame intimate footing; and in about three weeks after, as Frederick was ſitting one morning with his aunt, he had the mortification of ſeeing this interdicted perſonage enter with the two young ladies, when Juliana preſented him to the company as "her lord, her wedded bridegroom." Their hands had been joined

joined that morning, in the preſence only of a brother of Mr. Anneſley's (the ſame to whom the reader has been already introduced at Calcutta) and the clerk of the pariſh; as Amelia, though privy to the tranſaction, had excuſed herſelf from attending the ceremony, for reaſons which ſhall hereafter be explained.

Mrs. St. Aubyn felt ſomewhat chagrined, when ſhe found how little confidence her niece had placed in her in this affair. She had indeed ſuppoſed, that the young people were on a perfectly good underſtanding with each other, but never imagined that a marriage would be even agreed on, much leſs actually take place, without her being previouſly informed of it. In a moment, however, ſhe recovered from her ſurprize, and, tho' piqued, received the bride and bridegroom with kindneſs and courteſy. Not ſo Frederick; he gave them a fierce and angry look, and then flung out of the room without ſaying a word.

All proper etiquettes were obſerved on this occaſion; Juliana apologized to her aunt for the ſecrecy with which ſhe had concluded this affair; but alleged, in excuſe, that as it was a

thing ſhe had reſolved on, and was entirely her own concern, ſhe could not go through the farce of conſulting others, when ſhe did not mean to be influenced, in the ſmalleſt degree, by any advice that might be given. She knew well too, ſhe ſaid, that if her brother ſhould be informed of her intention, ſhe muſt go through a great deal of unpleaſant altercation with him, which ſhe thought it much better to avoid. But ſhe had ſtill a more powerful motive for ſecrecy than either of theſe, which was, a fixed reſolution that ſhe would have no ſettlement made, but their fortunes left entirely at liberty. Now ſhe was perfectly aware, that if her intended marriage had been known, this point would have been ſtrongly conteſted with her, and, perhaps, even ſteps taken to prevent her carrying into execution, what the generality of the world would conſider as a wild and romantic idea. She aſſured Mrs. St. Aubyn that this was the real truth, and that ſhe had not acted thus from any want of eſteem and affection for her, whom ſhe had always conſidered, from the unabated kindneſs ſhe had ſhewn her from her infancy, as entitled

tled to every mark of her reſpect and confidence.

Mrs. St. Aubyn, ſatisfied with theſe apologies, made many profeſſions of kindneſs and good-will to the new-married couple, and invited them to remain at her houſe till their affairs could be arranged, and they could ſettle themſelves entirely to their own ſatisfaction; an offer which they eagerly and gratefully accepted.

But Frederick was not ſo eaſily appeaſed; he thought his ſiſter's offence of a very heinous nature, as ſhe had not only diſgraced her family by ſuch an alliance, but had acted in defiance of all brotherly authority; and he vowed, that he never would be reconciled to her and Anneſley without an apology on their part, which reſolution he made known in a note he ſent them immediately on his return home.

Mr. and Mrs. Anneſley, certainly, would have been better pleaſed to live on good terms with their brother than on bad; but as they could not underſtand what *juſt* cauſe of offence they had given him, they did not feel diſpoſed

to make him any apology; they therefore anſwered his note to this effect, adding, however, that when he ſhould chooſe to meet them as friends on equal terms, they ſhould be very ready and happy to do ſo: This idea was not more grateful to him than the idea of apology was to the Anneſleys; and thus, for ſome time, no proſpect of a reconciliation appeared.

CHAPTER

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER XIX.

So ſpake the falſe diſſembler unperceiv'd;
For neither man nor angel can diſcern
Hypocriſy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone.

MILTON.

HAD the diſcordant parties been left entirely to themſelves, it is impoſſible to ſay how long punctilio, and the pride of not making the firſt overtures, might have kept them at variance.

But intereſt could ſoon accompliſh what punctilio ſought to delay; and Dawkins's intereſt was ſo deeply concerned in bringing about a general reconciliation in the Blandford family, that he could not reſiſt uſing all his influence with his pupil for effecting it as ſpeedily as poſſible. What rendered this ſo

eſſential

eſſential to him was, that while the breach continued he was himſelf debarred the ſight of Amelia, which was at the ſame time a ſevere mortification to his feelings, and an obſtacle to the general proſecution of his deſigns.

In fact, Frederick, though in general as ſubmiſſive to his tutor as he could poſſibly wiſh, yet would on very extraordinary occaſions revolt from his authority, and take his turn of command; and the outrageous conduct of his ſiſter, was one of thoſe which rouſed him to ſuch an exertion. Accordingly, when on returning home from Mrs. St. Aubyn's, on the morning of her marriage, boiling over with indignation, he met with Dawkins, he enjoined him, in a tone of authority which ſhewed that he would not be diſobeyed, never to enter his aunt's doors again till ſhe and his ſiſter ſhould have made proper atonement for their behaviour; and then proceeded, as well as his rage would allow him, to relate the mighty cauſe which he had for this injunction.

Dawkins, though exceſſively chagrined, forbore, at that time, to make any kind of remonſtrance

remonſtrance againſt the reſtrictions laid upon him; nay, he even commended the ſpirit with which Frederick had acted, and ſaid, that even had he not deſired him to refrain from going to Mrs. St. Aubyn's, he ſhould certainly never have thought of viſiting at a houſe where a pupil, for whom he had ſuch an unbounded regard, had been ſo injuriouſly treated. But while he ſaid this, he ſecretly reſolved to loſe no opportunities of endeavouring to mollify Frederick's anger as ſoon as its firſt emotions ſhould ſubſide, and with theſe he did not doubt of being frequently furniſhed: Nay, he even flattered himſelf that the affair might ultimately turn to his advantage, ſince, by appearing to Amelia and her aunt in the amiable character of a peace-maker, he could not fail to recommend himſelf greatly to the eſteem of both.

Watching his opportunities therefore with Blandford, this experienced diſſembler began firſt by extolling the godlike qualities of forbearance and forgiveneſs of injuries; and when in two or three different converſations he had eſtabliſhed their excellency as general

principles,

principles, he proceeded, in the regular way of Theologians, to make a particular application of his doctrine, by ſhewing, that in how much the more Blandford had been ill-uſed by his ſiſter, ſo much the more laudable would he be in pardoning and conſenting to be reconciled to her.

But the moment that ſuch an idea was ſtarted, Frederick flew out in a rage: "No, by heaven!" he cried, "the firſt advances never ſhall come from me!—If Juliana ſhould chooſe to apologize for her conduct, I might, in conſideration of the near relationſhip that ſubſiſts between us, be tempted to accept a ſlighter acknowledgment from her, than I would from any other perſon who had offended me; but I never will make the firſt advances, ſo let me hear no more of that, Dawkins."

"I grant that you have juſt cauſe for this anger, my dear Sir; but yet" ——

"Oh, none of your *yets* for me:—I tell you, Dawkins, that I never will be friends with my ſiſter again till ſhe has made a full confeſſion

confeſſion of her fault in marrying that black-guard Lieutenant."

"And certainly you have a right to expect ſuch an apology;—but ſtill, my dear Sir"——

"Well, and what?—It is not that I care ſo much about her marrying without my knowledge, though I think I had ſome right to expect to be informed of it,—but a man of no family, no fortune"——

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Blandford, a thouſand times, for interrupting you;—to be ſure, I have no right to interfere in a matter which is your concern alone; but I muſt beg leave to ſet you right in this reſpect, my ſacred love of truth will not permit me to ſuffer your remaining in an error. Should I therefore, in explaining myſelf, appear to ſtep a little out of my ſphere, believe me, it is ſolely owing to my abhorrence of miſtake in any way, united to my attachment and reſpect for a family to which I am under ſo great obligations, and whoſe happineſs I know muſt very materially depend on living together in

that

that harmony I ſo earneſtly wiſh to ſee re-eſtabliſhed."

"Well, well, I am thoroughly convinced of your regard for me, ſo ſay any thing you pleaſe on the ſubject, only remember that I will not hear of ſuch a thing as my making the firſt advances."

"Nor had I the leaſt idea of propoſing it, my dear Sir; I was only going to remark, that you ſeem to have a more contemptible opinion of Mr. Anneſley's family than it really deſerves."

"Hey! how! what do you mean, not contemptible?" ſaid Frederick, looking all eagerneſs, "what, have you any thing to ſay to the contrary?"

"Why, you know, Sir, that there have been perſons of that name of conſiderable note in various profeſſions. It is a well-known name in the army, and has more than once appeared on the ſtaff; beſides, there have been many of the family eminent in the law line, and there is a baronetage in it, although I do not know whether it may belong to that branch from which your brother-in-law is deſcended."

In

In proportion as Dawkins recounted the great perſonages who had been, and were then, members of the Anneſley family, Frederick's countenance aſſumed a greater degree of complacency, till at length, at the mention of the baronetage, it was ſoftened into an expreſſion of ſomething ſo nearly approaching to perfect ſatisfaction, that the tutor ventured to pronounce the words brother-in-law, a title by which he had never dared before to deſcribe Anneſley; and it was now ſo well received that he thought he might proceed, not only without fear of danger, but with the greateſt hopes of ſucceſs.

He recollected, therefore, many more inſtances of the Anneſleys being a conſiderable family in the kingdom; that a cavalier of that name encountered Joan of Arc before the city of Orleans; that another fought in the field of Agincourt; nay, he had even an idea that one was enrolled among the valiant troop who followed Richard Cœur-de-Lion to the holy war. Frederick knit his brows; he thought of the pedigree which his ſiſter had given him, and began to be afraid

that

that his tutor had caught the infection and was bantering alſo.

But Dawkins was now ſo intent on his ſtory that he had loſt his attention to his pupil's countenance, nor obſerved this change, and as he daſhed boldly on with an appearance of the moſt ſolemn ſerioufneſs, Frederick became ſatisfied again and re-aſſumed his ſerenity. At length, when the tutor thought that he had been ſufficiently diffuſe on the ſcore of family, he ſhifted his ground, and began a moſt elaborate eulogium on the goodneſs of Frederick's heart and underſtanding, which he concluded by painting in ſtrong and animated colours, the vaſt increaſe of happineſs which he would confer on the young couple by being reconciled to them; then obſerved, that it was a thing done and could not be undone; and finally, that nothing leſſened the conſequencce of a family ſo much in the world as its head being at variance with the younger branches.

Theſe important conſiderations had all the effect which the artful tutor could wiſh, nor did Frederick once ſuſpect (what was really

the

the caſe) that Dawkins knew no more of Anneſley's family than he did himſelf, but implicitly believed all that he advanced. The fact was, that while the one party had condemned the family as low and inſignificant, only becauſe he had never heard of it before, the other, with full as little knowledge of it, undertook its defence; and as he had ſufficient plauſibility to put a gloſs of truth on whatever he might wiſh to paſs as ſuch, by dint of bold aſſertion he at laſt effectually gained his point, and the conference ended in Blandford's deputing him, as miniſter plenipotentiary to Mrs. St. Aubyn's, to negociate an amneſty, and adjuſt all differences between the belligerent powers. This was ſoon effected, on the ſole condition of a promiſe of complacent behaviour towards each other in future; and the treaty was ratified by dinners both at Mr. Blandford's and at Mrs. St. Aubyn's, at which health and happineſs to Mr. and Mrs. Francis Anneſley was the firſt toaſt given.

The accompliſhment of this reconciliation was an inexpreſſible relief to Dawkins's mind, who now began to redouble his aſſiduities towards

wards Mrs. St. Aubyn and her niece, with the former of whom, he flattered himſelf he had made no inconſiderable progreſs in inſinuating himſelf into her favour: but not ſo the latter, whoſe faith to her Charles was not to be ſhaken by trifles. It was true, that a long time had now elapſed ſince his departure, and ſhe had received no letter from him; which ſeemed more extraordinary, as ſhe knew that letters from other paſſengers, who went out in the Ponſborne, had been received by their friends. But for this ſilence ſhe could frame an hundred excuſes; he might wait to hear from her, as a ſanction to his writing, before he ſhould think himſelf authoriſed to commence a regular correſpondence with her, as no agreement to that effect had actually paſſed between them. If this were the caſe, however, ſhe thought him over ſcrupulous, as, conſidering on what terms they had been previouſly to his departure, he muſt be ſufficiently juſtified in writing to her; nay, it ſeemed rather improper that he ſhould not do ſo, even though nothing relative to it had been ſettled. But, if this were not the reaſon, his ſilence might

might be accounted for in a hundred other ways perfectly ſatisfactory; in ſhort, ſhe could believe any thing rather than that his fidelity to her could be ſhaken.

To one who only contemplated his conduct with the eye of a lover, theſe excuſes might paſs current; but Mrs. St. Aubyn could not be ſo eaſily ſatisfied, and was diſpoſed to put very unfavourable conſtructions on his ſilence, which, the longer it continued, appeared the more culpable, and ſhe began at laſt to heſitate in her good opinion of him, and to fear that the reports to his diſadvantage were not altogether ſo unfounded as ſhe once had been diſpoſed to conſider them. Perhaps this change was in a great meaſure aſcribable to Dawkins, who plied her ſo artfully with little malignant inuendoes, that, though ſhe determined not to attend to them, they, inſenſibly to herſelf, made ſome impreſſion upon her.

Amelia could not but perceive this alteration in her aunt, nor, when ſhe ſaw it, reſiſt attempting to bring her back to her former opinoins. She repreſented therefore the extreme improbability that the reports ſpread of Charles's

Charles's miſconduct before he left Shropſhire could be true; for, if he had been ſuch a profligate, ſymptoms of it muſt ſometimes have appeared, ſo much as he was at Sherborne, how careful ſoever he might be in general to conceal it; and as none ſuch ever had appeared, it was ſurely not equitable to believe the mere idle tales of a babbling world.

Mrs. St. Aubyn owned the force and juſtice of Amelia's remarks, and ſaid that ſhe was at firſt as little inclined to pay attention to the reports as Amelia herſelf, but many circumſtances had ſince occurred to make her view them in a different light. She heartily wiſhed that in the end her ſuſpicions might prove unjuſt: "But, at the ſame time, my dear child," ſhe ſaid, "let me conjure you to be on your guard, nor let a captivating exterior ſo far blind your judgment, as to render you inſenſible to any imperfections of which it may be the cloak: And aſk yourſelf ſincerely, whether it does not ſeem more probable that Mr. Meadows ſhould be a conſummate hypocrite, than that ſuch a variety of accuſations ſhould be laid to his charge, without

out *any foundation* whatever, for what purpoſe could it anſwer to any one to frame ſuch falſehoods?"

Thus argued Mrs. St. Aubyn on the one ſide, and Amelia on the other; and, as is moſt commonly the caſe, each quitted the argument under exactly the ſame impreſſions with which they entered on it. But the latter ſoon after thought that ſhe diſcovered the true reaſon of this alteration in her aunt.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER XX.

Solo a te pensa l'alma, e sol favella
Di te la lingua, e il cor te sol vorrebbe,
Ni altra donna agli occhi miei par bella.

LORENZO DE MEDICI.

AT the ſame time that Amelia made this diſcovery, Dawkins firſt began to perceive an effect ariſing from the reconciliation which he had laboured to bring about, the poſſibility of which, notwithſtanding his uſual foreſight, had never entered his mind, and which threatened to be even a greater obſtacle to his purſuit of Amelia, than Charles Meadows himſelf;—this was, a rival in the perſon of his pupil.

In fact, Frederick, on his return to England, was irreſiſtibly ſtruck with that beauty

to

to which no one could fail to pay homage, and even from the firſt moment when he beheld Amelia, whom he left but in the bloſſom of her charms, but found now in their maturity, was her devoted ſlave. But, circumſtanced as he then was, etiquette forbad him to turn from mourning over the aſhes of a father, to pay his devoirs at the ſhrine of beauty, however attractive; and before he could be releaſed from this interdict, the ſtory of her's and Charles's meeting in the church, which reached him with the addition that it was a preconcerted one, convinced him that, if he regarded his own peace of mind, he muſt check this paſſion in its bud. He ſtrove therefore, as much as poſſible, to convince himſelf that a woman who could place her affections on ſo worthleſs an object as young Meadows, was totally undeſerving of his notice.

But, how much ſoever he cheriſhed this idea, he found it a very weak combatant againſt charms ſo tranſcendent; and the more he ſtrove to attain an indifference to them, the more he felt their faſcination. In order

therefore to break the ſpell entirely, he reſolved to haſten her's and her aunt's departure from Sherborne as much as decency would permit. But no ſooner were they gone than he became reſtleſs and uneaſy, and ſighed again to taſte the poiſon which had already penetrated but too deeply into his heart. It was this motive principally which carried him to London as ſoon as his deteſted rival was out of the way; and this, perhaps, might alſo have ſome influence in his acceding to the pacification with his ſiſter and her huſband.

But this paſſion, which he could not reſiſt, occaſioned him no ſmall uneaſineſs; he thought that he was guilty of very great meanneſs, in ſuffering himſelf to be the rival of a man whom he deſpiſed, and to ſigh continually for a woman who was ſcarcely leſs deſerving of contempt, for cheriſhing ſo ill placed an attachment, and for not poſſeſſing diſcernment enough to prefer the head of the ancient houſe of Blandford, to the low-born ſon of a country parſon. While occupied with theſe reflections, he would reſolve to ſhake off feelings ſo degrading; but, again, he ſaw Amelia, and had

had his rival been a porter, and preferred to him, ſtill he could not have forborne to love her.

Dawkins beheld the progreſs of this paſſion, which Frederick began now to be as little able to *conceal* as to *reſiſt*, with the bittereſt pangs of jealouſy and ſelf-reproach, curſing his want of foreſight not to conceive the extreme probability, that the ſame attractions, whoſe power he himſelf ſo ſtrongly felt, might have a like powerful effect on his pupil. But to curſe would avail him little; he muſt endeavour to counteract the folly of which he had been guilty, and ſeek to render Amelia herſelf, if poſſible, as much an object of averſion to Frederick as even Charles. Often, therefore, would he entertain him with enlarging on the extreme concern, nay, almoſt diſguſt, which it gave him, to ſee the exceſſive weakneſs ſhewn by Miſs St. Aubyn in her paſſion for ſuch a wretch, adding, however, that ſhe would be well paid for it, for no one could ſuppoſe that he would remain conſtant to her; indeed, the contrary began to be pretty obvious. And what man of reſpectability could

ever think of marrying the deſerted miſtreſs of Charles Meadows; one who muſt have degraded herſelf in the eyes of every perſon of character by her ill placed paſſion, nay, whoſe reputation was rendered doubtful by this connection, ſince it was not very probable that ſuch a man, in the frequent opportunities given him, would leave her honour unattempted; and perhaps as little likely, infatuated as ſhe was, that ſhe ſhould refuſe him even the laſt favours.

Theſe obſervations certainly had their effect on Frederick, and often did he make reſolutions never to ſee Amelia more; but, lover like, unable to keep them, in half an hour after they were made he found himſelf ſeated by her ſide, though hardly knowing how he came there.

Yet to make a declaration of his paſſion, circumſtanced as ſhe then was, was impoſſible; he could only reſt on the hope that when ſhe ſhould at laſt be convinced of her lover's criminality, as he had no doubt ſhe muſt one day be, ſome proſpect of ſucceſs might be opened for himſelf. But though he was ſilent, his

his eyes, his manner, in Amelia's company, ſufficiently betrayed his ſentiments, and occaſioned her many hours of the extremeſt uneaſineſs; ſhe ſaw that this was an alliance which would be deemed ſo deſirable by her friends, that her refuſal would not be yielded to without perſuaſions, at leaſt, to the contrary, on their part; perhaps it might even be followed by perſecutions, ſome latent ſparks of which ſhe thought ſhe diſcovered in her aunt's alienation from Charles.

But in juſtice to that lady it muſt be obſerved, that her niece was miſtaken in this ſuſpicion. She acted on leſs unworthy motives;—while ſhe thought that the happineſs of her beloved Amelia would be promoted by her union with Charles, ſhe had not only ſanctioned but encouraged it; but from the moment when her confidence in his good character was ſhaken, her heart revolted at the idea of a continuance of the connection, and ſhe ſought its diſcouragement as earneſtly as ſhe had before ſought its promotion.

In the mean time, the day was approaching when Frederick was to come of age, which

was to be celebrated at Sherborne with the feſtivities uſual on ſuch occaſions. But the young man, far from feeling the joy commonly felt at the proſpect of emancipation from infancy, only repined that he muſt go down to his family ſeat, and thus leave London and Amelia. A thought, however, ſtruck him, to endeavour to perſuade Mrs. St. Aubyn, with her two nieces and Mr. Anneſley, to accompany him, for which he had a ſufficient reaſon in wiſhing them to be partakers of the rejoicings that were to take place.

Mr. and Mrs. Anneſley accepted the invitation with the ſincereſt pleaſure, as a proof that their brother's reſentment was entirely at an end, and Mrs. St. Aubyn appeared much inclined to accept it alſo; but Amelia poſitively refuſed to go, as ſhe thought that acting otherwiſe might, with juſtice, be conſtrued by Frederick into an encouragement of his addreſſes; neither did ſhe chooſe to forego her accuſtomed annual viſit to her father. Frederick was mortified at her refuſal, and waited with impatience the time when ſhe and her aunt ſhould return to London, when he determined

termined to return thither alſo, and take an houſe and form an eſtabliſhment ſuitable to his fortune.

While Mrs. Anneſley was at Sherborne ſhe ſaw Mr. Meadows frequently, and learned from him that Charles was well, and ſettled in India with the moſt flattering proſpects; that he wrote in high ſpirits, and expreſſed the utmoſt impatience to receive letters from England; he mentioned his Amelia with the moſt paſſionate expreſſions of affection, and full of hopes that he ſhould make a fortune ſufficient to enable him to ſettle her in the world in a manner conformable to his wiſhes. All this Juliana imparted to her friend, but it only ſerved to perplex her more and more, as it appeared quite incomprehenſible that he ſhould write thus to his father, yet never write to her at all.

The Anneſleys, in the courſe of their viſit to Sherborne, gained ſo much on their brother's affection, that at the concluſion of their ſtay there, he requeſted them to accompany him to London, and conſider his houſe as their home, as long as he ſhould remain un-

married; which propoſal, Anneſley having left the army, they very gladly accepted.

This arrangement made without conſulting the Rev. Mr. Dawkins, was not at all pleaſing to that gentleman, as he had already ſeen enough to be aſſured, that in proportion as the Anneſleys' influence over Frederick ſhould increaſe, his own was likely to decline. Neither was he altogether without apprehenſion, that as Juliana ſtill retained her friendly diſpoſition towards Charles, ſhe might ſo far ſucceſsfully combat her brother's animoſity againſt that young man, as to make him diſcontinue the perſecution he had been long carrying on for the purpoſe of deſtroying his good name; a revolution which would by no means accord with the tutor's plans. Againſt this, however, was to be balanced, that Frederick could not be diſpoſed to feel much complacency towards a man who ſtood between him and his beſt hopes; and, beſides, as Dawkins himſelf was to remain a member of Frederick's houſehold till he ſhould be provided for, he would ſtill be on the ſpot to watch both the brother and ſiſter, and act as contingencies might require.

But

But notwithſtanding theſe conſolatory reflections, ſufficient grounds of jealouſy were left to keep him in a conſtant ſtate of diſquietude, leſt from this new order of things, new obſtacles to his love and ambition ſhould ariſe; and while his face was conſtantly dreſſed in ſmiles, his heart was a ſtranger to one moment of real content. Could the poſſeſſion of Amelia, if he ſhould at laſt accompliſh it?—or could the pomp and pageantry of epiſcopacy, accompanied with the ſoothing ſound of "*my Lord,*" if ſuch exaltation were in ſtore for him, repay the torments which he thus inflicted upon himſelf in their purſuit?

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER XXI.

Are we in life thro' one great error led?
Is each man perjur'd, and each nymph betray'd?
Of the superior sex, art thou the worst?
Am I of mine the most supremely curst?

PRIOR.

ON Frederick's return to London, he ſought every poſſible opportunity of ſeeing Amelia, and ſhe as aſſiduouſly ſhunned him, while Dawkins watched them both with the moſt jealous attention. At length, an event happened which gave the Divine mixed ſenſations of pleaſure and mortification; the former, as it ſeemed likely to give the coup-de-grace to Charles's character; and the latter, as the probability appeared that another, and not himſelf, would reap the benefit of his labours.

This event was the arrival of Winterton in London,

London, who was come over on buſineſs, as he pleaded, in order to obtain leave of abſence from India, but, in reality, for no other purpoſe than to fetch his beloved Fanny. Winterton had been extremely aſſiduous in the poſt aſſigned him, and brought accounts of Charles's conduct which fully ſatisfied his employers, conſiſting of long details of the diſſipated life he led at Calcutta, which had ariſen at laſt to ſuch a height that Mr. Benington was obliged to ſend him up the country.

Fanny was no ſooner in poſſeſſion of theſe details, than ſhe ſummoned Dawkins to their uſual place of rendezvous, to receive inſtructions how ſhe ſhould proceed; when ſhe was commiſſioned to report in Mrs. St. Aubyn's kitchen, that ſhe had ſeen a perſon who was come from India, and who knew Mr. Meadows very well. This report Dawkins doubted not would go from the ſervants to Amelia, and in conſequence ſhe would ſee Winterton, and learn his ſtory from his own mouth; thus would ſhe be poſſeſſed of all he wiſhed her to know, without the leaſt ſuſpicion of his being any way concerned in it.

The

The plan ſucceeded to Dawkins's wiſhes; no ſooner did Amelia hear of ſuch a perſon's being in London, than ſhe began to plan how ſhe could ſee him, or at leaſt, by his means, learn ſome tidings of her Charles. She was afraid, from the altered ſtate of her aunt's ſentiments toward her lover, to ſend for Winterton to her houſe, and ſhe therefore applied to Mr. Anneſley, to ſeek out the man ſhe wanted, and gain her the deſired intelligence. This Anneſley readily undertook, and ſpeedily executed; but heard with great concern, that Charles's conduct in India carried with it a too fatal confirmation of the truth of what had been related of it in England before he ſailed for that country.

What was to be done? Muſt he ſtab the feelings of the unfortunate Amelia with imparting to her the diſmal tale? He conſulted with his wife, and they both agreed that it was neceſſary ſhe ſhould know it, and hoped that it might rouſe her ſpirit, and detach her affections from a man whoſe unworthineſs even ſhe herſelf could no longer doubt. Accordingly, when ſhe came to the Anneſleys, to enquire the

the event of Francis's miſſion, he told her in the kindeſt and tendereſt manner poſſible, what he had heard; to which ſhe liſtened with a countenance which beſpake a heart almoſt broken, and at length exclaimed, "Then I am loſt indeed!—but never—" She ſtopped, for ſhe had fixed her eyes on Anneſley, and ſtarted as ſhe looked at him.

Anneſley ſeemed ſurpriſed. "Why did you ſtop on looking at me, Miſs St. Aubyn?" he ſaid. "Am not I your friend as well as my Juliana?"

Oh, yes, I believe you to be moſt ſincerely ſo," ſhe anſwered; then pauſed, as if to recollect herſelf; and endeavouring to aſſume compoſure, ſhe proceeded: "I was going to ſay what is better left unſaid; I will not bind myſelf by any vows, any reſolutions, but regulate my conduct by circumſtances; and if, indeed, Mr. Meadows is the man he is repreſented, he ſhall find that to how great exceſs ſoever I love him, yet I know very well what a due regard to honour and principle requires of me, and will purſue that line of conduct, though my heart ſhould break in the trial."

Anneſley

Anneſley applauded the reſolution ſhe expreſſed, and urged her ſtrongly to make one more effort, and entirely break the ſhackles to which ſhe had ſo long ſubmitted, adding, "Amelia St. Aubyn cannot be at a loſs to ſupply his place, ſhe knows that already there are hearts enough at her command."

Amelia gueſſed to what he alluded, ſighed, ſhook her head, but made no anſwer; and in a moment after they were interrupted by Mr. Blandford himſelf entering the room. Too much agitated to be able, at that moment, to bear the ſight of a third perſon, more particularly when that perſon was Frederick, Amelia haſtily roſe up to depart. He felt extremely mortified at her thus ſhunning him, but, however, followed to attend her to her carriage; in going to which he preſſed her hand ardently, and ſaid: "Why will you ſo ſtudiouſly avoid me, Amelia? 'tis cruel, 'tis barbarous!" They were the firſt words of paſſion he had ever addreſſed to her, and never could they have been worſe timed; ſhe could not take notice of them, but hurried into

into the carriage, where ſhe threw herſelf back and burſt into an agony of tears.

Frederick returned to his brother and ſiſter, the former of whom he found leaning againſt the ſide of the chimney, looking mournfully at the fire; the latter with her head reſted on her hand, and in tears. "Good God, Frank," ſaid he, "what is the matter? Why did Miſs St. Aubyn hurry away on my entrance? Why are you thus down-caſt? And why is Juliana in tears?"

Anneſley ſhook his head. "I know not," ſaid he, "whether I ought to anſwer all theſe queſtions, yet wherefore attempt to conceal ſhameleſs profligacy, which ſeems not at all anxious to conceal itſelf." He then related all he had heard from Winterton, and what had juſt paſſed with Amelia on the ſubject; on hearing which, Frederick claſped his hands together in an extacy, and emphatically exclaimed, "Then, thank heaven, I hope that lovely creature's eyes will at laſt be opened, and ſhe will learn to deſpiſe the worthleſs villain as much as he deſerves."

And, indeed, the forlorn Amelia began to fear

fear that ſhe had hitherto deceived herſelf, and muſt at laſt give up a hope which had ſo long been her ſolace and ſupport; and that honour, duty, every virtuous principle, called on her to ſubdue a paſſion for many years her pride and glory. She returned home in a ſtate of agony which ſhe could not conceal, and her aunt tenderly enquiring into its cauſe, ſhe owned it without the leaſt reſerve, when Mrs. St. Aubyn ſaid: "Alas! my deareſt child, I have been for ſome time fearful that ſuch a confirmation of your lover's unworthineſs muſt one day come to light; but ſince he is this worthleſs character, let us thank heaven that he ſtands thus detected, before your inevitable ruin was ſealed by the exchange of the marriage vow!" Amelia ſtarted, fixed her eyes on her aunt with a wildneſs that alarmed her, and made her inſtantly drop the converſation, and endeavour, by a change of ſubject and the moſt ſoothing attentions, to divert the ſorrows which ſhe truly compaſſionated.

While Winterton remained in England he had frequent interviews with Anneſley, and always contrived to amuſe him with ſtories of

young

young Meadows, which placed him in the moſt unfavourable point of view poſſible; and at his departure he promiſed to ſend occaſionally, by letter, farther details of his proceedings. In allowing this, Anneſley was, no doubt, highly to blame, though he was urged to it by no other motives than the pureſt friendſhip for Amelia, and a wiſh to alienate her affections entirely from an object which he now believed to be unworthy of them. But he ought to have reflected, that how deſirable ſoever may be the end in view, and howſoever worthy the motives for ſeeking to attain it, they cannot juſtify its purſuit by unworthy means. And ſuppoſing even that no other objection lay againſt thoſe he was now employing, a very little experience in the world might have convinced him, that they were of all others the leaſt calculated to obtain information which was really accurate. The ſpy, of courſe, thinks that he cannot any way recommend himſelf ſo effectually to his employer, as by placing the actions of the perſon he is appointed to watch, in the very worſt light; and, conſequently, if he does not frame abſolute

abſolute falſehoods, he, at leaſt, repreſents what has truth for its baſis, in ſuch over-charged colours, that it is difficult to recognize the likeneſs of the picture, through the meretricious garb with which it is clothed.

Winterton's conduct indeed was a perfect illuſtration of the truth of theſe poſitions; for in all the accounts which he tranſmitted of Charles's expenſive and diſſipated manner of living, he never mentioned one particular circumſtance without ſome foundation on which to build his ſuperſtructure. Thus, if Charles gave an entertainment, which of courſe muſt be in the ſtile of the country, conſequently, if only fairly repreſented, muſt ſeem extremely luxurious to an European, it became in Winterton's hands a ſcene of the moſt voluptuous and ſenſual debauch; and the refuge he afforded to Zelinda and her daughter, with the unfortunate manner in which he had involved himſelf with Indamora, was repreſented as his keeping three Hindoo women for the ſole purpoſe of his own pleaſures. To this channel of information it was that Captain Anneſley alluded, in his converſation

ſation with Rainsford at Mr. Sykes's, the *authenticity* of which he could not allow to be called in queſtion.

Frederick, encouraged to proceed in his purſuit by the hopes which now appeared to dawn on his paſſion, was more aſſiduous than ever in his attentions to Amelia; and at length, encouraged by the tranquillity which ſhe had ſo far gotten the aſcendant over herſelf as to be able to aſſume, he ſeized a favourable opportunity, and made her a formal tender of his hand, heart, and fortune. Such an offer was what ſhe had long dreaded, and endeavoured by all means to avoid; ſhe anſwered it with a refuſal, polite indeed, but ſo peremptory, that Frederick was convinced he had deceived himſelf in ſuppoſing her heart freed from its ſhackles; and if he did not totally relinquiſh the hopes which he had but juſt began to entertain, he was aſſured that his proſpect of ſucceſs muſt at leaſt be very diſtant.

Mrs. St. Aubyn was chagrined when informed by her niece of what had paſſed, as ſhe thought the propoſed alliance a very deſirable

ſirable one; and ſo it certainly was, with this *ſmall* exception, that her niece did not like the man, and ſtill paſſionately loved another. But true to the affection which ſhe had uniformly ſhewn this child of her adoption, ſhe forbore to wound her by any obſervations on what ſhe had done, nor ſuffered her chagrin to be viſible.

Mr. St. Aubyn was not quite ſo forbearing: Unluckily for his daughter he happened to be in London at the time Frederick made his propoſals; and when he learned his ill ſucceſs, he poured out a volley of the moſt bitter reproaches to poor Amelia for her folly, accompanied with the moſt wounding reflections on that raſcal, Meadows, who, he ſaid, he was ſure was the cauſe of her ſtanding ſo much in the way of her own happineſs.

Amelia replied to him with calmneſs and dignity, that his reproaches were equally unkind and unjuſt; ſhe would not deny that her heart was yet unable to ſeparate itſelf entirely from an object to which it had once been ſo devoted; but he ſhould find that ſhe had fortitude enough to make any ſacrifice honour might

might require. As to Mr. Blandford, he was not a man to whom ſhe ever could attach herſelf, and ſhe ſhould feel herſelf highly culpable, were ſhe to impoſe ſo far on the blind paſſion he had cheriſhed for her as to accept his offers, when conſcious that ſhe had not a heart to diſpoſe of. If ſhe ſhould ever feel her affections totally releaſed from their original engagement, then, and then only, ſhould ſhe conſider herſelf as juſtified in liſtening to ſuch overtures as Mr. Blandford's.

The ſolemn and deciſive manner in which ſhe declared her reſolution, aſtoniſhed and impreſſed her father ſo deeply that he was unable to make any reply, or to diſown the juſtice of her determination; and while he lamented the fatal paſſion which he thought blinded her to her true intereſt, he could not but admire the firmneſs of mind diſplayed in her deciſion.

THE RECTOR'S SON.

CHAPTER XXII.

Then first he found on what a faithles base,
Their nodding towers Ambition's builders place.

ROWE.

AND now, in order the more effectually to put an end to any hopes which Frederick might entertain of her ever yielding to his paſſion, Amelia determined not even to ſee him any more, while they ſhould both remain in their preſent ſituation. She had indeed long wiſhed for an entire ceſſation of intercourſe between them; but while he forbore to open his mind to her in direct terms, ſhe thought herſelf not ſufficiently authoriſed to require it. Now this ſeemed not only an excuſable, but an extremely proper meaſure to take, as ſeeing him might appear too much like

like giving a tacit ſanction to any hopes he might ſtill entertain.

The concluſion of this affair ſhe felt as no ſmall relief to her mind, which was oppreſſed with troubles in various ways. One very great ſource of her uneaſineſs was the ſtate of her aunt's health, which continued ſo much on the decline that ſhe was ſtrongly recommended by her phyſician to try the air of Liſbon, as the laſt hope of its reſtoration. In this voyage, Amelia was of courſe to attend her; and had it originated in a leſs unpleaſant cauſe, ſhe would have rejoiced in ſuch a temporary abſence from a country, where for ſome time ſhe had enjoyed ſo little tranquillity, nor had a proſpect of any thing better by continuing in it. But under the circumſtances in which it was undertaken, the voyage itſelf was only an addition to her anxieties: and as if the Fates were all combined to make her ſituation as uncomfortable as poſſible, a third perſon was added to their party, and this, almoſt the laſt in the world whoſe company ſhe would have deſired, even Dawkins himſelf.

From the moment that he heard of the voyage, his buſy brain had been anxiouſly at work, conſidering of the expediency of offering his ſervices as *cavaliere-ſervente* to the ladies on that occaſion. He thought this would afford a golden opportunity of furthering his ſuit with his miſtreſs; his hopes of gaining whom, had been very conſiderably increaſed by the ill ſucceſs of his pupil, whoſe pretenſions he had always conſidered as the moſt formidable obſtacle to his own. And what could be more natural than that he, an idle man, and nearly connected with the Blandford family, ſhould make this offer, as it muſt be moſt deſirable for two females going abroad, to have a *protector* with them, ſince it is *impoſſible for females to protect themſelves!*

But, on the other hand, it was a matter to be duly weighed, whether, while he was purſuing his love, he might not be endangering his proſpects of fortune. In his abſence, it was poſſible that ſome other perſon might inſinuate himſelf into Blandford's favour, which, from his own experience, he knew not to be a very difficult taſk; and he was well aware of the

the danger incurred by loſing ſight of a patron, before his promiſes of promotion ſhould be actually performed. Another thing to be conſidered in his caſe was, whether he might not hazard the detection of his plots againſt Charles; but this point he ſoon ſettled to his ſatisfaction:—Winterton and Fanny Warren, by whoſe means alone the whole "myſtery of iniquity" could be laid open, were both removed to ſo great a diſtance as to preclude apprehenſion from them; and on Anneſley's commencing a correſpondence with Winterton, Dawkins had ordered the clerk not to write to him any more. With reſpect to endangering his preferment too, he ſoon ſatisfied himſelf, for Frederick had abſolutely promiſed him the living of Galſtone; and honour, therefore, would preclude his diſpoſing of it elſewhere, even though it ſhould become vacant before his return. On the whole, the arguments for the voyage appeared ſo much more powerful than thoſe againſt it, that he determined on making the offer of his ſervices, which he accordingly did without delay, when they were accepted with many

thanks on the part of Mrs. St. Aubyn; and he embarked with her and Amelia, ſoon after, in the Falmouth packet.

Nothing material occurred during their abſence from England, which was extended to about a year and a half, when they all returned, thoroughly diſcontented with their excurſion. Mrs. St. Aubyn, that ſhe had undergone ſo much fatigue and expence without receiving the leaſt benefit to her health; Amelia, haraſſed to death with the fulſome aſſiduities of Dawkins, which ſhe had been conſtrained to endure for ſo long a time, and wiſhing for a cottage in a remote corner of the kingdom, where ſhe might hide herſelf from all mankind; and Dawkins, that he had made ſo little progreſs in gaining the affections of Amelia, which had been his principal object in going.

A piece of news, however, awaited their return, which gave Amelia ſo much pleaſure as almoſt to compenſate for the chagrin ſhe had experienced in her abſence. Frederick Blandford, for the firſt half year after her departure, was melancholy, dejected, and avoided

avoided company as much as poſſible: At that time a ſiſter of Mr. Anneſley's came to make them a viſit, who, from the firſt moment when Frederick ſaw her, he thought extremely like the cruel fair one for whom he had ſo long ſighed. Impreſſed with this idea, he felt an immediate partiality for her; and this partiality increaſing the more he ſaw of her, ſhe at laſt ſo far ſuperſeded in his favour the object ſhe reſembled, that he determined to try whether that reſemblance were only in the face, or would extend to ſentiments alſo. Accordingly, he made the ſame offer to her which he had made ſome time before to Amelia, when he found, to his great joy, that the heart of Miſs Anneſley was made of more penetrable materials (at leaſt of materials more penetrable to his prayers) than that of Miſs St. Aubyn: She conſented immediately to make him happy, and their hands were accordingly joined a fortnight before the return of the Liſbon voyagers.

Of courſe, on this event, Mr. and Mrs. Anneſley quitted him; and preferring the country to London, as a conſtant reſidence,

they purchaſed a pretty houſe, with a ſmall quantity of land, at Elſham, in Hertfordſhire, and only delayed taking poſſeſſion of it till they had ſeen their long abſent friends after their return.

Nor was Dawkins without conſolation, as a piece of news awaited his arrival in England, quite as welcome to him as the marriage of Blandford was to Amelia; and this was that the living of Galſtone was become vacant. But his joy, though at firſt as great, was, not ſo durable as Amelia's. The Dean and Prebendaries of the cathedral church of ——, ſome little time before, in looking over ſome old writings, had diſcovered that the advowſon of this living was, ſome century and a half back, in the poſſeſſion of that church; nor did it appear by what means it had ever paſſed out of their hands. They thought this a diſcovery not to be diſregarded; they recollected that the laws had *wiſely* provided, that whereas twenty years quiet poſſeſſion of property, was ſufficient to eſtabliſh the right of the poſſeſſor againſt *common* claimants; yet, as the church was no *common* one, ſhe ſhould have

greater

greater latitude given her, nor be debarred at any time from urging her claim, how long ſoever it might have lain dormant. The Dean thought that Galſtone was in a pleaſant ſituation, and that he ſhould like it as a country reſidence for a few of the ſummer months; and the ſenior Prebendary thought, that if any thing ſhould happen to make the Dean change his mind, he ſhould have no objection to taking it, and ſo thought all the Prebendaries. It was therefore agreed, that if on conſulting counſel, a probability ſhould appear of eſtabliſhing their claim, the whole matter ſhould come before a court of *law*;—to a court of *equity* it would hardly have been ſafe to refer it. A caveat againſt inſtitution was then entered with the Biſhop of the dioceſe, and when Dawkins preſented himſelf before his lordſhip for that purpoſe, he was thunder-ſtruck with being informed of what had paſſed.

This affair came on to be tried at the next county aſſizes for Shropſhire, when Mr. Blandford produced documents which clearly ſhewed that this living was made over from the church to his family for a juſt equivalent. Yet as this

circumſtance, from ſome cauſe or other, did not appear in the records of the church, and for ſeveral other good reaſons which the law always has ready at hand, particularly, that an *and*, or an *if*, or a *but*, or ſome ſuch important article was omitted in the papers which Frederick had produced in defence of his right, a verdict was given againſt him, and the advowſon of the living reſtored to its original poſſeſſors, without the equivalent's experiencing a like reſtoration.

Here then ended Dawkins's hopes of this valuable preferment, and here began a ſeries of diſappointments which he was now doomed to experience.

His ſecond mortification aroſe from finding that his hopes of advancement, through the intereſt of the young nobleman already mentioned as the friend of his pupil, were built on a foundation yet more ſandy than thoſe of the living of Galſtone. This intimacy was very convenient and agreeable, both to the branch of nobility and to Frederick, when it was formed; they were both in a foreign country,

Where,

Where, with a brother's warmth, a brother's smile,
The ſtranger greets each native of his iſle.

PLEASURES OF MEMORY.

And they entered into it therefore with great eagerneſs; but, like all ſuch intimacies, when it became no longer deſirable to either, it died away inſenſibly. The Peer, on ſettling in England, got into quite a different *ſet*, as it is called, from that in which young Blandford moved, notwithſtanding which, at firſt, they uſed to meet pretty frequently when they were in London; but as this could only be by appointment, and each found himſelf out of his own *ſet* at the other's houſe, an exchange of civility ſo troubleſome, and ſo little conformable to the inclinations of either, was ſoon given up. Thus Dawkins, on his return from Liſbon, found their whole intercourſe conſiſted in ſhaking hands with great warmth, and expreſſing the utmoſt pleaſure if they happened to meet accidentally, and leaving cards at each other's door once or twice in the courſe of the winter.

Extremely irritated that a connection from

which he had hoped ſo much, ſhould have been dropped with ſuch careleſſneſs, Dawkins could not reſiſt the powerful impulſe he felt to expoſtulate with Frederick on the ſubject, and try if he could not bring about its renewal. Still he was unwilling that his own ſelf-intereſted views ſhould appear as the oſtenſible reaſon of his expoſtulations, and he therefore ſought other grounds for them, and other motives to urge him on to the point he wiſhed. He repreſented, that the nobleman was now ſo high in court favour, and had ſo large a ſhare of parliamentary influence, that if he had not ſuffered this connection to drop, his lordſhip might have brought him into Parliament; and hinted, that this might even now be accompliſhed, if he would receive inſtructions from him how to play his cards properly.

But Frederick, far from falling into the ſchemes of the divine, damned the Parliament, and ſaid he would not accept a ſeat among ſuch a ſet of ſcoundrels, if they would pay him for his trouble. How he could fail ſo much in the *reſpect* due to ſo *auguſt* a body,

we

we are at a loſs to conjecture, we only give the fact; it might be, that he was at that moment troubled with the tooth-ach, or might feel a twinge from the gout in his foot; ſomething of this kind muſt probably have ruffled his temper, to induce him to uſe ſuch expreſſions. However that might be, Dawkins found to his ſorrow that all hopes from that quarter were at an end.

But this was not all; for, on the death of Mrs. St. Aubyn, about half a year after her return to England, it appeared that the bulk of her income conſiſted in a life annuity only, and that all ſhe could leave Amelia did not amount to above four thouſand pounds. Thus, after having conſidered her fortune, no leſs than her beauty, as an object of deſire, Dawkins ſaw her now left with a pittance which he conſidered as too contemptible to be deſerving of his notice. It was ſtrange that ſuch a man ſhould be ſo ill-informed with regard to Mrs. St. Aubyn's affairs, but the moſt vary are ſometimes caught tripping.

This diminution in Amelia's fortune, however, did not appear of ſo much importance

as he might ſome time before have thought it; for he began to be pretty well convinced that he had not the ſmalleſt chance of ſucceeding in his purſuit of her, and that he had, for no benefit whatever to himſelf,

> Put rancours in the vessel of his peace,
> . . . . . and his eternal jewel
> Given to the common enemy of man.
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

Nor had theſe mortifications fallen, as ſuch, on Dawkins alone; the loſs of the living of Galſtone was felt almoſt as ſeverely by Frederick himſelf, both as it was no pleaſing matter to be deprived of ſo much of his property, and ſtill more as he began earneſtly to wiſh to rid himſelf entirely of his tutor, who had been declining in his eſteem ever ſince the Anneſleys and he had been on terms of friendſhip. Francis early conceived a diſlike to the divine, although he could not poſſitively aſcertain what created it; and he often therefore, without any particular meaning, ſaid very ſlighting things of him in Blandford's preſence, which, from the undeſigning manner of their

their introduction, had far more effect than ſtudied harangues, in communicating to him an equal diſtaſte for Dawkins's ſociety.

As no proſpect therefore appeared to Frederick of being able to promote him in the church, (for of two other livings in his gift, one was in the poſſeſſion of an incumbent not more than forty years of age, and the other of Mr. Meadows, who, though advanced in years, was ſtill healthy and vigorous, nor likely ſoon to make a vacancy) he reſolved to give him a ſum of money as the ultimatum of his expectations from the family. He accordingly preſented him with two thouſand pounds, accompanying it with many expreſſions of regret at the diſappointment he had experienced; adding, that as he had no hopes of being able to repair it in any other way, he had taken this method of acknowledging his ſervices.

Dawkins was extremely indignant to find that thoſe ſervices were not higher rated, and had ſome difficulty to reſtrain himſelf from telling Frederick ſo in pretty ſtrong terms; but a moment's reflection ſuggeſted to him that

that this could not be of any ſervice, and might be injurious to his intereſt, as it was better ſtill to preſerve a fair outſide with his pupil. But to bring himſelf to warm expreſſions of gratitude was too great an effort, and he only made a bow of acknowledgement, and left his preſence, to wander about like Satan, ſeeking whom he could devour.

CHAPTER

THE RECTOR's SON.

CHAPTER XXIII.

To my dear equal, in my native land,
My plighted vow I gave, I his receiv'd;
Each swore with truth, with pleasure each believ'd:
The mutual contract was to heav'n convey'd;
In equal scales the busy angels weigh'd
Its solemn force, and clapp'd their wings, and spread
The lasting roll, recording what was said.

PRIOR.

ON the death of Mrs. St. Aubyn, Mr. and Mrs. Anneſley made Amelia the offer of living with them, which ſhe gladly accepted, ſenſible that in her ſituation ſhe was not likely to be comfortable in going to live with her father, and ſhe ſoon after joined them at Elſham. Here ſhe hoped at length to find ſome portion of that tranquility to which, ever ſince the death of Mr. Blandford, ſhe had been a ſtranger. Frederick was happily diſpoſed of,

and

and he therefore could not trouble her any more; Dawkins appeared to have given up his purſuit, which had been extremely troubleſome and diſagreeable to her; and as to Charles Meadows, his total neglect of her, and the diſſolute way of life in which he was engaged, had ſo far alienated her eſteem, that ſhe truſted, by the aid of time and repoſe, ſhe might entirely get the better of ſo unfortunate an attachment.

But, alas! ere ſhe had enjoyed this repoſe half a year, another ſtorm aroſe to haraſs and torment her, from the ſame quarter whence all her troubles had ariſen—the dæmon Dawkins. This wretch, thwarted in all his expectations from Mr. Blandford, made ſeveral attempts to gain an intereſt in the families of other perſons of rank and fortune, who might be capable of paying him well for the dirty work he was ready to undertake, as the price of their favour. In theſe he had been totally unſucceſsful, for he found the great men already ſo well provided with *hangers-on* for all purpoſes, that there were no vacancies for him; and, indeed, the *hangers-on* themſelves were

were not willing to admit another to ſhare the plunder. At length, the only employment he could obtain was to be aſſiſtant curate at the pariſh of St. James's, Weſtminſter, where his province was chiefly to perform the ſurplice duty, of which, in that extenſive and populous pariſh, he had a pretty large ſupply.

One morning, when he had been making five couples happy or unhappy, no matter which, by joining their hands; after regiſtering their reſpective marriages, he amuſed himſelf with turning over the regiſter for ſome years back, till at laſt his eye glanced accidentally on the name of St. Aubyn; — "St. Aubyn! well, and what of that name?" he thought within himſelf. He examined farther, and read, "On ſuch a day, in ſuch a year," (which, he recollected, muſt be the very day of Charles's departure for India) "Charles Blandford Meadows, batchelor, and Amelia St. Aubyn, ſpinſter, were married in this pariſh church by banns, &c."—And the witneſſes to the marriage were Juliana Blandford and Edward Villars, which he knew to be the name of the pariſh clerk, who had held that office

office for many years, and had probably often ſet his hand as a witneſs to like clandeſtine unions. To one of a ſimilar kind he certainly did, not very long after, when Miſs Blandford choſe to follow her friend's example, and conſult her own inclinations alone, in the choice of a huſband: on which occaſion, as Amelia was forced to decline the reciprocation of good offices for which Juliana ſeemed to have a claim on her, not chuſing to ſign by the name of Meadows, and doubting the validity of ſigning by any other, recourſe was again had to Mr. Villars, as a witneſs in conjunction with Captain Anneſley.

Thus were the hidden things of darkneſs at length brought to light; and Dawkins diſcovered that the connection which he had been ſo aſſiduouſly endeavouring to break off, had gone a ſtep farther than had entered into his ideas, at leaſt when he firſt ſet about it. I ſay when he *firſt* ſet about it, becauſe he had afterwards had ſome ſuſpicions that ſuch a thing might be, from expreſſions which occurred in ſome of the letters which had fallen into his hands; yet, as he had never heard it hinted

from

from any other quarter, he thought he muſt be miſtaken, and ſought therefore other ways of ſolving thoſe expreſſions.

But now, being in full poſſeſſion of the fact, he reſolved that it ſhould remain a ſecret no longer, than till he could find a convenient opportunity for ſliding it into the world, without an appearance, on his part, of ſeeking to publiſh what was not already well known; and ſuch an opportunity ſoon preſented itſelf.

Since his proſpects in England had worn ſo cloudy an aſpect, he had revolved in his mind various plans for courting the favours of fortune in other climes, under more propitious ſuns, and particularly had been ſeeking information relative to the Eaſt Indies, with an idea of tranſporting himſelf thither. With this view he called on Captain Anneſley, who was then under ſailing orders for that country, in order to requeſt him to make enquiries for him on ſome particular points; but on entering the Captain's room, he found him ſurrounded by a large circle, all come to pay their valedictory viſits.

In the courſe of converſation Miſs St. Aubyn's

byn's name being mentioned, one of the company aſked Captain Anneſley, if ſhe were not gone to live with his brother; to which he anſwered in the affirmative, adding, "where I hope ſhe will be happy, for, indeed, ſhe has hitherto had many things to haraſs her mind and make her extremely uncomfortable."

"Nor are her ſufferings at an end, I fear," ſaid Dawkins, "if, as I hear is the caſe, her worthleſs Huſband is coming over to claim her."

"Huſband!" exclaimed Anneſley—"Huſband!" exclaimed all the reſt of the company.

"Ay," ſaid Dawkins, looking ſurprized, "wherefore do you exclaim thus?"

"Why I never till this moment," ſaid Anneſley, "heard ſuch a thing ſuggeſted, as that they were married."

"That is very extraordinary, indeed; I thought it had been a circumſtance very well known."

"Not to me," ſaid one; — "nor to me," ſaid another; — and ſo they ſaid all.

"You aſtoniſh me exceedingly," ſaid Dawkins. "I had no idea that ſo many perſons could

could be aſſembled together, all of them known to Miſs St. Aubyn, as ſhe has choſen to be called, and yet ignorant that ſhe is really Mrs. Charles Meadows."

"Nay, even now," ſaid Anneſley, "I ſcarcely know how to believe it; for, I think, if it were really true, my brother and ſiſter muſt have known it, and I could almoſt be certain that they have no idea of ſuch a thing."

"Mrs Anneſley moſt undoubtedly has, for ſhe was one of the witneſſes to the marriage."

"What a damned ſly dog then Frank is, for I ſwear he never dropped the leaſt hint of it to me; but, damn me, if I don't have the whole ſtory out before I go away. Faith, I had ſome thoughts of making up to Miſs St. Aubyn myſelf, for ſhe is a deviliſh fine girl, to be ſure; and by Jove, 'tis a thouſand pities that ſhe ſhould be thrown away on ſuch a wretch, only to be preſident of his Hindoo ſeraglio."

"Well," ſaid another of the company, "I was always ſupriſed at her refuſing Mr. Blandford; but it comes out now, that there was a

pretty

pretty ſtrong reaſon for it. But, how came *he* not to know of this marriage?"

"Oh, he had heard of it a hundred times," ſaid Dawkins; "but he was in love, and ſo did not chooſe to believe it."

"But, Dawkins," ſaid Anneſley, "how's this? Why, I thought you were to be the happy man who was to carry off this capital prize in the lottery of female beauty, as ſoon as you could make out enough of the *ſine-qua-non*; ſuch, at leaſt, you have been chronicled by the world."

"Me!—a good joke indeed!—What, becauſe I went to Liſbon with her and her aunt, I ſuppoſe?—No, no, I can aſſure you that I never had ſuch aſpiring thoughts as to rival the *great Mr. Meadows!* But pray, gentlemen, do not mention me as authority for this matter, I only give you *common report*; ſo *common*, that I had no idea but you muſt all have heard it, or I never had mentioned it."

"And now you are in a damned fright leſt it ſhould not be true, and ſo a parſon, for once in his life, be guilty of telling a ——!

I beg

I beg pardon, an awkward little monoſyllable was pretty near eſcaping me, but I ſwallowed it again juſt in time. You'll excuſe me, Dawkins!"

A general laugh applauded Captain Anneſley's wit; the poor parſon felt a little ſore, but thought it better to join in it, and ſo the converſation ended. The company ſoon after went away one by one, till Dawkins and the Captain were left tête-à-tête; when the former making known the object of his viſit, and the latter obligingly undertaking to execute his commiſſion, they parted with great civility on both ſides.

No farther pains were neceſſary to propagate the ſtory of Amelia's marriage; it was too valuable a piece of intelligence not to be ſpread, in a very ſhort time, among all the goſſips in town; whence it circulated, with great rapidity, into other parts of the kingdom, till it reached the ears of Mr. St. Aubyn in Leiceſterſhire. He at firſt diſbelieved it, as he ſaid that his daughter had promiſed him faithfully never to marry young Meadows, if the reports of his profligacy ſhould be confirmed;

firmed; a promiſe which ſhe could not have made, had ſhe been conſcious that their hands were even at that time actually joined.

His reaſoning was certainly plauſible, had he been accurate in the premiſes on which it was grounded; but he had fallen into the error of ſuppoſing that his daughter had made him ſuch a promiſe from not ſufficiently attending to the manner in which ſhe had worded her conditional renunciation of her lover. She only ſaid, that ſhe would never conſent to live with a man who had renounced all principles of honour and morality—an engagement which it was in her power to fulfill, and to which, therefore, ſhe had ſtrictly confined herſelf.

But, however Mr. St. Aubyn might at firſt diſbelieve this report, it was ſo often repeated, and the ſtory of the marriage ſo circumſtantially related, that at length it became impoſſible to with-hold his belief any longer; and in a tumult of rage and vexation, at the double deceit which he thought Amelia had practiſed, he ſet out for Hertfordſhire, to give vent to his indignation to her in perſon.

When

When he arrived at Elſham, he was informed, that neither Mr. nor Mrs. Anneſley were at home; the former was in London, in order to take leave of his brother, and the latter was gone to make a viſit in the neighbourhood. He was not ſorry to learn that his conference with his daughter would be ſo private; and on being told, that ſhe was retired to a favourite ſpot of hers in the grounds, he went thither in purſuit of her.

At the ſound of footſteps ſhe raiſed her eyes from a book on which ſhe had been intent, and beholding her father thus unexpectedly, with a countenance full of auſterity and reproach, ſhe ſtarted up, terrified, exclaiming, "Good God! Sir! what can be the matter! —your ſudden appearance—that look of diſpleaſure"———

"Yes, Amelia," interrupted he, "it is a look of diſpleaſure indeed, and it remains for the anſwer you ſhall make to one plain queſtion, to decide whether it ſhall be exchanged immediately to the look of affection with which I am accuſtomed to meet you, or be

fixed there for ever. Am I to addreſs you as Miſs St. Aubyn, or Mrs. Meadows?"

So abrupt, and unlooked for a queſtion, on ſo tender a ſubject, quite overpowered Amelia; nor could ſhe immediately reply.—She looked earneſtly at her father.—"It is enough," he ſaid, "I read my anſwer in that heſitation; your ruin then is complete, you are the wife of that villain."

"I am, indeed, the wife of Charles Meadows; I will not attempt to deny it; our hands were joined on the very morning of his departure."

"How, Amelia!—on that morning only?—then,"—She ſaw his meaning; "yes, Sir," ſhe ſaid, "our hands were joined on that morning; he was ſummoned away in half an hour after the ceremony was performed, and I have never ſeen him ſince."

"Then, thank heaven, it is not ſo bad as I feared!—The marriage bond, yet unconfirmed, may be broken through, and my heart is at eaſe!"

"Hold, Sir,—do not ſuppoſe that I can ever

ever conſider myſelf as any other than the wife of Mr. Meadows."

"What!—would you then ruſh headlong into ruin?—claſp vice and debauchery to your boſom?—away! you are no child of mine!"

"Oh, yet you are too haſty, my father!—it is true, that, bound as I am to him, I never can conſider myſelf as at liberty to wed another; but as I told you, on a former occaſion, when"——

"Wound me not with that recollection!—Oh, Amelia, Amelia, you promiſed me then, under certain conditions, never to marry this man: Could I ſuſpect you of being guilty of ſo mean an evaſion?—ſuſpect that you were even then his wife?"

"Pardon me, Sir, you are indeed under a miſtake; I only promiſed what I could, and will, rigidly adhere to; that I would yield to any ſacrifices which honour might demand of me, nor ever conſent to become the aſſociate of a ſhameleſs profligate.—Oh God! Oh God! that I ſhould ever live to conſider Charles Meadows as ſuch!—but, ſince it is ſo,

ſince conviction of it is forced upon me, I will avail myſelf of the liberty which the law allows to perſons circumſtanced as I am, and reſiſt his claim if he ever ſhould demand me as his wife."

"And will you do ſo, Amelia?—and will you be ſtill ſo far my child?—and may I rely on you?"

"Aſſure yourſelf of it.—I have been for ſome time compelled to turn my thoughts to ſo heart-rending a ſubject, and I think I have now armed myſelf with a reſolution which is not to be ſhaken by threats, perſuaſions, or whatever other means he might employ to accompliſh his purpoſe."

"Oh, that I could ſee this point ſecured beyond a doubt;—that I could ſee you"——

"Not the wife of another—that you never ſhall while he remains alive."

"Oh, unfortunate, infatuated woman!—Oh, infamous, unprincipled libertine!—Amelia, Amelia, how could you ſuffer yourſelf to be thus ſeduced!"

"I was not ſeduced,—I knew what I was about, my father; and, in like circumſtances, ſhould

ſhould do the ſame again. I had every reaſon to have the higheſt poſſible opinion of this man; I loved him to exceſs; I ſaw him racked with a thouſand anxieties on my account; it was but this ſmall ſacrifice and he aſſured me he ſhould be contented; could I then refuſe it?—Oh, my father, you were once young; you once loved yourſelf; think then what poor Charles's ſituation was, and condemn me if you can."

"My God! my God!—why,—ah! why did I part with you ſo ſoon when you came to ſtay with me on Mr. Blandford's death? had I detained you then, all might have been well; and inſtead of being now the deſerted wife of a low debauchee, you might have been the happy ſharer in young Blandford's fortunes!"

"Name not that man I entreat you, Sir! —it requires all the ſelf-command of which I am miſtreſs, to enable me to think on him with any ſenſations ſhort of hatred, ſince I conſider him as the origin of all the unhappy Charles's errors and misfortunes. Had Mr. Blandford's ſoul not been inſenſible to the

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common dictates of juſtice, young Meadows never had been thrown on the rock where his virtues have been ſhipwrecked, and where he lies the miſerable ruin of a once noble fabric."

"Oh, Amelia, how is it that your heart ſtill wanders after a man whom you ought to hold in abhorrence."

"That I can never do: I can reprobate his conduct, I can mourn his errors; but be abhorrence of the man ever removed from my boſom. Oh, think, Sir, think; have I not known him from my earlieſt infancy? have I not always been accuſtomed to conſider him with the tendereſt partiality? Can I ever forget how honourably he acted towards me, when loving me ſo ardently, he yet forbore to ſeek any engagement with me till it could be immediately fulfilled, leſt he might ſtand in the way of my better proſpects? And can ſuch a man be abhorred?"

"He *formed* fine reſolutions indeed!—Oh, that they had been *kept* as well as formed, how many hours of miſery had then been ſpared both to you and to me."

"And

"And it was misfortune alone that occaſioned his breaking them. Never, never can I loſe the remembrance of that moment, when thrown off his guard by the diſtracted ſtate of his mind, he ſuffered expreſſions to eſcape him which revealed at once all his ſentiments towards me. Oh, why have I lived to regret that moment!—but 'tis paſt;—unkindneſs will burſt aſunder the ſtrongeſt bonds!—I will not ſee him if he ſhould come to England; let that ſuffice, my father, nor urge me more to break through vows which I muſt ever hold to be ſacred."

The painful ſtruggles which he ſaw rending the boſom of his daughter, united with the reſolution ſhe had declared, at length ſoftened the father's heart, and claſping her eagerly in his arms, he kiſſed her affectionately, while tears ſtood in his eyes. "Well, my child," he ſaid, "I will ſay no more; your own good ſenſe and virtuous diſpoſition be your guides:—the affair has altogether been a moſt unfortunate one; and there is yet this conſolation, that the life of ſuch a man is ſeldom of long duration. Yet, one thing more I would

aſk, Amelia:—Was my ſiſter privy to your marriage?"

"Indeed, ſhe was not; nor during her life had I ever any idea that ſhe ſuſpected it; but her will has given me reaſon to ſuppoſe that ſhe did ſo, as ſhe therein deſcribes me, not as her niece, Amelia St. Aubyn, but as Amelia, the daughter of the reverend Edmund St. Aubyn, of Glendover, in Leiceſterſhire."

"Then I am better ſatisfied;—that your young friend ſhould be entruſted with the ſecret was not unnatural; but I ſhould have been hurt that you had placed greater confidence in your aunt than in me."

They now roſe up, and went together to the houſe, where they found both Mr. and Mrs. Anneſley returned, and in earneſt converſation on the very ſame ſubject which had juſt occupied them. Captain Anneſley, in purſuance of the oath he had ſworn, queſtioned his brother about Amelia's marriage, the truth of which Francis poſitively denied, ſaying, that if ſuch an event had taken place in Juliana's preſence, he muſt have heard of it in the long time that they had now been married;

married; and as no hint of any thing of the kind had ever dropped from her, he pronounced the whole ſtory to be a fabrication of that damned ſneaking fellow, Dawkins's; and thus Captain Anneſley went to India, very doubtful of its truth, at leaſt, if not totally convinced of its falſhood.

But on Francis's return to Elſham, and relating to his wife what had paſſed between himſelf and his brother, Mrs. Anneſley's countenance immediately betrayed her knowledge of the fact in queſtion, which ſhe owned to her huſband, with an apology that ſhe had never imparted it to him. "Had it been my own concern only, my dear Francis," ſhe ſaid, "I certainly ſhould not have concealed the ſtory from you; but of the ſecret of another entruſted to me, I could not think myſelf authoriſed to make even you the partaker." Anneſley ſaw the propriety of theſe ſentiments, and applauded them; and they had juſt ſettled this matter when Amelia and her father joined them, and of courſe the converſation took another turn.

Mr.

Mr. St. Aubyn ſtayed a few days at Elſham, and then returned home, and thus this matter reſted; nor was Amelia ſorry, in the end, that her marriage was known before Charles's arrival, which ſhe underſtood to be ſoon expected. Thus Dawkins ultimately did her a kindneſs, when he meant only a gratification of his own malignity.

For him, when he heard that Charles was certainly coming over to England, he thought it no longer a country of ſafety for himſelf, and therefore, without waiting the reſult of Captain Anneſley's enquiries, he took his paſſage for India immediately, paſſing his rival on the ſeas, who landed within two months after his departure.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

BRITISH
20JY63
MUSEUM

ERRATUM.

Page 2, line 3, for *more* corporeal, read *less* corporeal.